

AFRICAN STUDIES

(Formerly Bantu Studies)

VOLUME 15 No. 1 — 1956

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF A TAMIL-HINDU MARRIAGE IN DURBAN¹

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SYNOPSIS

The marriage of a Tamil-speaking Hindu family is described from the beginning of negotiations between the two family-groups to the establishment of the girl in her husband's family home. The family of the boy takes the initiative in asking for a girl. Caste endogamy is the rule, and formerly (and to a limited extent at present) marriage with specific kin was preferred. Other factors, such as physical appearance and family reputation, are also very relevant in choice of a spouse. The final decisions and all subsequent activities are referred for sanction to the panchang (calendar).

Negotiations, if satisfactory, lead to a formal engagement which is a binding contract solemnized at the girl's home. The marriage ceremony itself takes place at the groom's (or in a hall hired by his family). The prayers and rites are very elaborate, and symbolize the 'binding together' of the couple, their purification and their benediction through the elements, their future responsibilities and status. The central rite is the 'tying of the tali (a special gold ornament) by the groom round the neck of the bride. The approval of this marriage by the kin of both parties is expressed in ceremonial gift giving.

The young couple are introduced by gradual stages to their new status, and three months after marriage a final ceremony is performed for the girl at their mother's home. Though marriage is predominantly patrilocal the girl retains strong links with her own kin throughout her married life.

This is the first of three articles on Hindu marriages in Durban. The Hindus constitute 74 per cent of the total Indian population which numbers 146,183 persons; 16 per cent of the Indians are Muslims, and under 7 per cent are Christians.² The Hindus are a heterogeneous group, drawn

from many areas and speaking diverse languages. The majority are Tamilians from the South, more especially from Madras and the Bombay Presidency.

The second article in the series will be an ethnographic account of marriage among Hindu-

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¹ I have carried out research among the Indians in Durban since 1953. I wish to acknowledge the help I have received in this article from Professor Sidney L. Kark, Director of the Family Health Research Unit, from Health Educators in the Institute of Family

and Community Health, Union Health Department, Durban, (Mrs. V. Padayachi, John Jeevaruthanum, Andrew C. Jacob, D. S. Govender, M. Maduramuthoo, T. Kisten, Miss N. Perumal and N. T. Pillay), and from M. Patchippaal Govender, and Pandits M. C. Moodley and S. M. Pillay.

I have witnessed 8 Tamil weddings and have selected the main rituals in the above description.

² Figures supplied by the Department of Census to the University of Natal, and relate to last census, 1951.

stani-speaking Hindus whose ancestors immigrated to Natal from Northern India, more especially from West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The Hindustani-speaking Indians claim relationship with the self-styled Aryas, who entered India circa 1500 B. C., and spoke an Indo-European language.

In the final article in the series I discuss variations in marriage ceremony; the symbolism and the principles of Hindu marriage in South Africa; and indicate some of the effects of the South African milieu on the traditional practices.

* * *

Soobramoney Chetty was the third son of a Tamil working-class family living in Durban. His two older brothers and an older sister were already married, and now that Soobramoney had reached 25 years of age, his father, B. S., a respectable, devout, conservative man decided that it was his duty to find Soobramoney a suitable bride. It was understood that he would bring her to live with him in his parents' home, and since his oldest brother with his wife and three children had recently moved and were 'living separate', the room in the house was available. The young bride would take her place in a home together with her parents-in-law, their second son, his wife and their two children, two sons younger than Soobramoney and three unmarried sisters-in-law.

Soobramoney's oldest brother was married to his mother's brother's daughter - a marriage highly approved of, his second brother had been given as wife a girl 'booked' in childhood, daughter of B. S.'s closest friend; his sister was married into a 'good family' of the same caste as her own parents. For Soobramoney an equally suitable mate was required; but the only unmarried maternal uncle's daughter was considered too old (she was 23), and Soobramoney had raised objections to two other girls his parents had tentatively 'suggested'. Soobramoney's parents asked their friends and relatives if they knew of a suitable wife for their son. Two families with marriageable daughters were suggested, and Soobramoney, together with members of his family went to look at them, without revealing the purpose of

their visit. But in one case the girl herself was unsuitable being quite uneducated and 'too dark', and in the other, her family created an impression of laziness combined with aggression. Then, at a neighbour's wedding Soobramoney saw Salatchie. He found out that she too was a Chetty, 18 years old, and he learnt the name of her parents, and where they lived, and there was no obvious clash of caste or age or status. Soobramoney told his mother that he had seen a girl whom he wanted to marry. His mother spoke to his father, who grumbled a little at the wilfulness of modern youth, but together they agreed that they would 'look at her' for themselves. This concession was a marked deviation from the conservative pattern of parental choice of a son's spouse, but it is becoming increasingly the norm in modern Tamilian families.

Preliminaries

Since they did not yet know the family they found a mutual friend, a distant relative of Soobramoney's who was highly respected in the community, to act as 'speaker and go-between', and one Sunday morning he took Soobramoney's father, mother, married sister, the two sisters-in-law, the mother's sister and father's sister (not Soobramoney) to pay an unofficial visit. They soon brought the conversation round to children and marriage. Later, the girl herself entered with a tray of cups of tea. She greeted the visitors with quiet charm and self-possession the more remarkable when one realises how protected a life young Hindu girls lead. Soobramoney's kin appraised her shrewdly, and his sister spoke with her a little. The guests did not stay long and took their leave without in any way committing themselves.

On the return home, each member expressed satisfaction with the family and the girl, but before going any further with negotiations Soobramoney's parents decided to discuss the matter with one of the most important relatives, Soobramoney's oldest maternal uncle who lived in Maritzburg (i.e. 30 miles away). Soobramoney described this man as 'too conservative', but the discussion with him brought out some

of the main considerations in the choice of a suitable Hindu bride.

As maternal uncle, he wanted to know everything about Salatchie. He enquired about the caste of both her parents, and had to be assured that they were the 'right Chetty's'. 'Too many families of nobodies' he explained, 'call themselves Chetty's nowadays. There are low Chetty's and high Chetty's; we are high Chetty's - don't forget'. He enquired about the home background of Salatchie's father and about his period of residence in South Africa. He asked what the father did and if the family had 'a good name'.

He spent a long time elaborating on all the qualities that were desirable in a wife: she must come from a decent, respectable family, she must be capable of managing a house, must care for her husband's family and she must be acceptable to the boy. All he said was echoed by his sister (Soobramoney's mother). Soobramoney's sister said that she had seen the girl and 'she is quite light-skinned, just like one of our own family and treads lightly on mother earth'. This evoked a lively discussion on the importance of physical beauty during which Soobramoney kept a polite silence. His mother said that more important than beauty were goodness and health and P. B. added that he hoped the family was free from any sickness that might be transmitted to the offspring. He told a lurid story of how an entire family was stricken with tuberculosis through one injudicious marriage. Soobramoney's father mentioned that Salatchie came from a much poorer family than their own, to which P. B. made a stereotyped comment of approval. 'We will not eat her parent's food, she will feed at our home.' Soobramoney's mother went further, saying that such girls were less spoilt than those from rich homes, and were 'better daughters-in-law'. In the end the maternal uncle said he was 'satisfied'.

Having obtained the approval of the kin, it still remained to discover if the choice was auspicious, physically and psychologically, to the gods. Soobramoney's father took the name of the girl and the boy to a brahmin to see if, according to the almanac (*panchang*) their 'stars of birth

matched'. This is known as *porthum parthal* (compatible seeing). If the stars of their birth had not been compatible, the matter could have gone no further.

Fortunately the augury was propitious, and the boy's parents sent a message that on a certain day and at a certain time (given by the brahmin) they would again visit the girl's home.

The Proposal

On the 'auspicious day' the boy's party, consisting of an uneven number of his kin and including both men and women (e.g. the boy, his maternal uncle and his wife, his father, mother, older sister and older sister-in-law) arrived at Salatchie's. This time their reception was more formal, and prominent among Salatchie's kin was her own maternal uncle who had the greatest say in the marriage of his niece, for, until fairly recently he could, had he wished, have claimed her for himself. After a polite and desultory chat, the conversation became more direct and personal, and detailed enquiries were made by both sides into ancestry and social background. Finally the boy's party, through his father, made his request with the delicate phraseology rarely used by moderns - 'We have come to seek a flower (*push-pum*) in the house' (i.e. something that is always blooming). The girl's father responded courteously and the other relatives joined in. The boy's father told them that they had already consulted the brahmin, but suggested that they might also wish to do so. It frequently happens that each group asks their own priest to read the almanac. The guests were then served with tea and biscuits (formerly they would have expected a meal) and before they left they agreed that they would have the engagement as soon as possible.

The Engagement (Nitchium)

The boy's parents obtained from their brahmin a suitable date for confirmation (*nitchium*) of the proposal, for until the *nitchium*, usually translated as engagement, the proposal is not binding, and each group could continue its investigations into the other's background and either could at this stage have withdrawn without dishonour.

The time between the proposal and its confirmation depended partly on the almanac and partly on the financial resources of both families.¹ Engagement expenses fall most heavily on the girl's kin, marriage expenses on the boy's. Salatchie's parents had no balance on which to draw, and were driven to borrow from relatives and friends. Soobramoney's family was relatively well-to-do.

The engagement must take place at the girl's home, and for it the boy's parents and the girl's, each invited close relatives.

An uneven number of men representing the paternal and maternal kin of both the contracting parties were brought face to face with each other, and pledged their support of the marriage. The boy's party was represented by his father, his older brother and his mother's brother, the girl's by her father, her sister's husband and her maternal uncle. The representatives sat on either side of a traditional mat, (*piee*), with the *kamatchee valaku* (holy lamp) alight between them. The priest prepared an image of Ganessa, the God of Wisdom and remover of obstacles, from a paste of turmeric, and on it he placed a piece of evergreen runner grass (*Dactyloctenium Aegyptium*; Tamil *Arumpiu*) and nearby a small brass bowl (*kinum*) of sandalwood paste and trays with betel leaves, areca nuts, coconuts, flowers and a small bowl of sandalwood. At the auspicious time, the priest lit a camphor before Ganessa and prayed. Then, facing the audience who act as witnesses, the priest asked both parents to give their consent to the proposal. Holding in both hands a tray with three betel leaves (on which he placed a *3d.* (tickey), three nuts, a piece of turmeric, and a lighted camphor, Salatchie's father took the solemn oath:

"The sky above me,
Mother earth below me,
And all the gods and goddesses,
Having listened to the oath that I take
I solemnly promise to give my daughter
in marriage to so and so".²

¹ In India, the wedding months are March, April, May and June, and according to Du Bois the possible reason for this is that during these months all agricultural work is either finished or suspended because of the heat, and also because the crops have been harvested

Soobramoney's father took the betel leaves from him and in turn repeated the oath, with the necessary adaptations.

The betel leaves were exchanged three times, and finally remained with the girl's father. The boy's father then smeared sandalwood on both cheeks of the girl's father, and he reciprocated. The bond between the two families was thereby sealed, and after that no other proposal for the girl could be considered. The relinquishing by the bride's mother's brother of his former claim to the bride was symbolized in a gift of money (5s. in silver) to him from the groom's kin (*Amanaan Koolee*). To-day this is explained as a recognition of his acceptance of the marriage. The *nitchium* ended with a delicious meal of curried vegetables (no meat), followed by betel leaves, betel nuts and lime (*thambalam*). Before the guests left the bride's party fixed a special day when they would, according to custom, pay a friendly visit to the groom. At this visit, the formal social gathering, the groom's party informed the bride's of the day set for the public betrothal (*parasam* - literally gifts). After the *nitchium*, Soobramoney (always accompanied by an older relative) was permitted to make occasional visits to Salatchie's home. Privacy was never sought by the young couple. Soobramoney had to gain the trust and goodwill of her parents and speak to her only in the presence of other people. These visits are a recent privilege: as Salatchie's father informed her 'when I was young, a man saw his bride for the first time under the canopy'.

Betrothal (Parasam)

Parasam, like *nitchium*, must take place at the girl's home, and on the sanctioned day, the groom's party left taking with them traditional gifts of five (an uneven number) sets of jewellery and a complete set of clothing - sari, blouse, petticoat; a full set of toilet requisites, - comb, mirror, *Koongum* (red ornamental powder) in a

and help to defray the wedding expenses. P. 216.

² Some say:

Poon woonathoo, Penn anerathoo.

(Gold of yours, and the girl is mine, i.e. your jewel and treasure is mine.)

special box, — fruits, coconuts, sweet meats, leaves and nuts, and a special purse in which should be a golden sovereign.¹

All the bride's kin were invited for the occasion, and the groom's party was most hospitably welcomed. Preparations similar to those of the *nitchium* were made, and again representative men of both families faced each other across the traditional mat. The engagement gifts were brought out by young married women of the boy's family on seven (uneven number) brass trays and placed on the mat, and the brahmin took them and recited *mantras* over the gifts. The purse is known as *molapaal Koolee* and is a fee to the bride's mother for suckling the bride; Salatchie's mother (like most mothers) refused the money. The brahmin returned the trays to the women who took them to the bride.

After the promise of marriage was confirmed, Salatchie, beautiful in the engagement robes and jewels, was brought out to be welcomed and blessed by her in-laws. Formerly this would have been her first appearance before her future husband. In very modern marriages the bride is present throughout the engagement, and she and the boy might even exchange rings and garlands.

The betrothal ended with a meal that the girl's people had provided for all the guests. Close relatives of both groups sat and ate together, but men as usual were separate from the women and were fed first. As soon as the meal was over the non-relatives left, but the close kin stayed on and the two fathers asked the *pandit* to find an auspicious date for the marriage.

Marriage

Once the auspicious day was agreed upon the public had to be invited. Formerly each group commissioned a man or woman, usually a close relative, to go from home to home with betel leaf and nut, symbolizing the invitation. At present, even the poorest family uses printed invitation cards. The Chetty's ordered 500, at a cost of £4, each side paying half. In addition to

the names of the parents of groom and bride, the cards carried the names of the couple's maternal uncles.² The cards are usually printed in the vernacular on the one side, in English on the other. Before the cards were distributed, the father and mother of the groom lit a camphor and pasted a little turmeric powder on the corners of the cards and prayed that the marriage be successful and the partners live well and long.

Invitation:

Mr. and Mrs. B. Sathaseevan Chetty of 22, 1st Street, Overport, and Mr. and Mrs. P. Manickum Chetty of 12, Bellair Road, Durban North, extend a cordial invitation to Mr. and Mrs., ... family to grace the marriage of Soobra-money (Pete) youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. B. S. Chetty, to Salatchie, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. P. Chetty, on Sunday 23rd May, 1954, at the Groom's Residence. Nuptial ceremony from 10.45 a.m. to 11.45 a.m. Music by 'Happy Orchestra'. Bride's party will leave from her home on Sunday at 8 a.m. Compliments from Mr. P. B. Chetty and Mr. T. S. Chetty.

R. S. V. P. 22, 1st Street,
Overport.

The first invitation went to the nearby temple, to notify the public in the *gramam* (district)³. Invitations were taken in person by the bride's and groom's parents to their maternal uncles and respective *samendis* (parents of spouses of children already married) together with 2s. or 2s. 6d. a betel leaf and nut. The *samendis* are so sensitive about this, that they refuse to accept an invitation if brought by a third person, and will not come at all if it is sent by post.

The Nuptial Line Pole or Milk Pole

The first ceremony specific to the Tamil wedding is the planting of a bamboo pole symbolizing 'the building up of a new family'. The pole, known as *Mugartha Kaal* (nuptial line pole) is raised at the groom's home even though the rest of the ceremony is in a hall. At sunrise of the third morning before the marriage, the brahmin came to Soobramoney's home to perform the ceremony. He instructed five women, married and with their husbands still living, to bathe the pole (which must have five or seven knots), bility for the marriage. Sometimes only the parents' names appear.

³This practice is only adhered to by the more orthodox.

¹ In some cases toilet requisites are omitted, or occasionally the coin.

² In some cases they may be replaced by the name of the older brother or other relatives who hold responsi-

while he chanted prayers invoking the blessings of health, wealth and children on the young couple. In the bathing the women employ liquids associated with Hindu ceremonial - honey, curds, turmeric water, rose water, sandalwood water and sweet oil. The pole was then adorned with dots of *Koongan*, and the brahmin tied round it a new white cloth dyed yellow with turmeric, and into the knot he tied also a 3d. and three kinds of special evergreen and/or milky leaves (*mah hellā* - mangoe leaves; *arasang hellā* ficus religiosa leaves; *kalyana moringa hellā* - hyperanthera leaves) and *dharba*, a strong green grass used in many Hindu rituals. The pole was stood in a special hole hollowed with a piece of silver (3d.) and smeared with unguents, and the women who had taken part each received a betel leaf, betel nut and ticky as token of gratitude. Once the pole was raised, the house had to be 'clean', 'pure', and no flesh could be cooked in the home of either groom or bride. The *Mugartha Kaal* is the foundation of the bridal canopy, and symbol of the new home. It plays an important part till the end of the elaborate series of rites.

The Anointing (Nelengu)

The pole-raising is followed by the *nelengu* (anointing), and essential personal preparations of both groom and bride for the state of marriage. It is less a religious than a social function, for though a priest is present, the anointing, which is the central act, is by married women relatives of the couple.

The initial *nelengu* is performed separately for bride and groom at their respective homes. This is known as the *seeka nelengu*, because the *seeka* nut, (a nut which has a soapy quality and was formerly used as a soap) is the main ingredient. For the *nelengu* at Soobramoney's home, the women of his family prepared a small altar (the *kolam*). They cleared a space near the pole, smeared it with cowdung and made a design in flour (or lime) and turmeric. Soobramoney led by his eldest sister's husband, henceforth described

as his *thoyee poolay* (best man) circled the altar three times before he sat on a long, low stool facing East, for the 'anointing' to be performed. Under the stool a poor person (formerly a *Dhobi* (washerman of the lowest caste) laid a piece of white cloth on which the family sprinkled white rice. Small brass bowls with olive oil, sandalwood, saffron, *seeka* and red water (*allum*) and a tray with betel leaves and nuts were put in front of him on a special three-legged stool (*moo kalee*) reserved for marriage occasions. The *nelengu* paste, which had already been prepared by the women of the family consisted of the crushed *seeka* nut, turmeric, three different kinds of oil. In a separate bowl was red water (*allum - manjar*) made of turmeric, coloured red with lime; the house lamp (*kamatchie*) was burning. Five of the married women of Soobramoney's family, led by his father's sisters and followed by his own married sisters, dabbed a little oil on his head, and a little of all the other ingredients on his cheeks and arms, then circled the tray with red water three times round his face in the rite known as *disti* (removal of evil) and dropped a penny into the *allum*. In return, Soobramoney gave each woman a betel leaf and nut and prayed with both hands raised. The atmosphere in which the *nelengu* took place was jovial, and normal inhibitions were discarded. Onlookers made comments 'to take away the boy's shyness and prepare him for the company of women'. When all was over Soobramoney again circled the *kolam* and went inside to bath, while his family fed the guests. The white rice and the pennies in the red water were given to a poor man (formerly to the *Dhobi*).

A similar ceremony took place at the bride's home, her father's married sisters and her own married sisters taking precedence and after the ceremony Salatchie was given a ritual bath in water containing three kinds of sweet-smelling leaves - gum, guava, and syringa leaves.

Close relatives may give *nelengu*, which involve considerable expense, in their own homes to show their affection and to honour bride or groom and their parents. The *nelengu* must be an uneven number, usually three or five. In addition to the *nelengu* by their own parents, Soob-

ramoney had a *nelengu* performed for him by his married sister and his father's sister and Salatchie by her married brother's wives. The final *nelengu* is a joint affair on the marriage day itself, and is known as the *sandanum* (sandalwood) *nelengu*, because sandalwood is the main ingredient. The period from the first to the last anointing is a period of seclusion; boy and girl are not allowed to visit or roam around, but must remain quietly in their respective homes.

The *nelengu* thus has three main aspects: the physical, which involves grooming and beautifying through smearing and bathing; the social, conveyed through remarks and handling by a specific category of people; and purificatory, expressed in ritually cleansing ingredients. Most of the ingredients for example, turmeric and sandalwood can never be smeared during any period of uncleanness – they purify and are themselves a sign of purity.

The Marriage (Kalianum or Trumanum)

On the day of the marriage, Salatchie and all her group of kin and friends went from her home to the groom's, where the main ritual was to be celebrated. His people, according to custom, provided the transport – two cars for the closest kin, a lorry for the rest. In olden days the mother of the bride never attended her daughter's wedding, nowadays she often accompanies her, but as Salatchie's mother said 'no mother can watch while the groom ties the *Tali*' – sacred pendant – round her daughter's neck, 'that she can't face; she will look away and shed tears'. The wedding was scheduled on the cards for 10 a.m. and the *panchangum* ordained that her party leave at 8 a.m. On the way, they stopped at the first temple, where her father lit a camphor and prayed 'that all would be well on the road ahead'.¹

The Welcome

The groom's home was beautified for the bride's reception. Outside the house was erected a *pandal* – a large tent-like structure with banana branches and palm leaves on either side of the

entrance, and within the main *pandal* was the colourful *poo-pandal*. Soobramoney's *poo-pandal* had been especially hired by his family and consisted of a square trellised enclosure about 6' X 6' decorated with green leaves, and flowers, and coloured lights, tinsel and coloured paper in intricate designs, surrounding the sacred name 'AUM'.

On arrival the bride's party were met by five elderly married women who led the bride to the entrance of the *pandal* and performed the ritual of *disti* (removal of evil by the circulation of *alum* (red water)). They then led her into the house, but Soobramoney, who was not yet allowed to see her, remained in his room.

The *progidur* (marriage priest) was already preparing for the ceremony. *Progidur* or *papen*, is the special Tamil term used for the priests who officiate at marriages and funerals. He need not be of the Brahmin caste, but, by virtue of his function, may be described as brahmin as well as *progidur*. At Soobramoney's wedding he was a *Moodley*, who performed marriages for a fee of £5 each at week-ends, and on other days ran a small fruit and sweet shop. He had acquired his knowledge of ritual through interest, not by a hereditary claim. For the task ahead he changed from Western clothes into a white shirt and white *dhoti*, and removed his shoes, as did everyone else who entered the *poo-pandal*.

The groom's people brought the ingredients for the ceremony. These included seven clay pots of different size and colour (the *salang garagum*), a tray with holy ash, flowers, betel leaves, a pestle, areca nuts, *kaathum podi* (sandalwood powder), clumps of sacred *dharba* grass, coconuts, camphor square, a grindstone and grinder (described together as *amee khul*), a special candelabra with lamps of clay filled with oil, five clay bowls with *palathanium* – different seeds – wheat, paddy rice, grain of two kinds, *mung* peas and pigeon peas (*tuvarait* and *sesamum*), and other articles.

The Opening Prayer

The priest took a banana leaf, spread on it rice, divided this by blades of *dharba* grass into 16

¹ This is not always performed. Some do prayers at home, and some perform no ceremony.

squares, and placed an areca nut in each square. Then he made a small cone of turmeric powder, mixed with water, to symbolize *Ganessa*, the god of wisdom and remover of obstacles. To it he offered petals of flowers and burning camphor. Very important was his next task – the preparation of the *kolsum*, an earthenware pot, decorated with dots, into which he poured honey and water, and in the mouth he arranged mango leaves, on which he rested a coconut wound round with a new white cloth. This became the image of the Supreme Being, the Absolute, and to it he offered *mantras* invoking all blessings on the young couple. The other articles were carefully placed in relation to the rising sun and to each other, the grindstone being in the south-eastern corner of the canopy. In connection with placing these articles in relation to the rising sun it may be pointed out that all movements at the marriage ceremony are with the sun. In other words they 'go the deasil'.

The Garagam (Seven Pots)

Once the bride was at the groom's home, the *progidur* began the ceremony. He accompanied seven married women drawn from both the girl's and the boy's groups to fill the seven marriage pots (*salang garagam*) with water. These 'seven waters' represent the seven main rivers of India, and stand for purification and creation, for life and for virtue. Suitable women for the task include wives of the bride's brothers and of the groom's brothers; married sisters are not suitable, as they join their own husbands group on marriage.

At the water place the brahmin prayed and placed a betel leaf, a betel nut and a coin opposite each pot, and gave the women a piece of cotton with a turmeric stick tied on it to 'bind' round each pot. Then the women carried the pots back to the *pandal* and the offerings, and also a bucket of sand, (*manal*). At the *pandal* they spread the sand on the floor, and rested the *garagam* on it. The groom came and placed in front of each pot a banana leaf, and on the leaf an offering of cooked rice, banana, betel leaf and nut, a little sugar and a coin.

The Arsanee Kaal

The priest planted in front of the canopy the *Arsanee kaal*, a bamboo with five or seven rings which the women washed with an uneven number of sacred unguents – milk, turmeric water, pure water, sour milk, and honey water – and decorated with *koongam*. They tied round the pole leaves of three sacred trees (the mango, fig and *pipal*) and nine kinds of grain with a yellow cloth and a coin,¹ and made the pole firm in ground sanctified with sacred liquids while three married women from the two groups held in front of it a lighted lamp. The pole then stood 'as the symbol of married life in all its aspects and ambitions'. To it, and to all the main sacred objects, the priest tied small sticks of turmeric, and prayed to the gods that the marriage be 'firm', 'be well tied'. This is a *kanganam*, or 'binding ceremony' indicating 'a sacred union of those entering the marriage relationship'.

The Witnesses

In the meantime the guests were arriving and before they took their seats, young girls offered them betel nut, lime and betel leaf to chew. Men, women and children sat separately. An orchestra had been hired for £5 by the groom, and while the harmonium, saxophone and trumpets played a young girl sang South Indian film songs across a loudspeaker. A friend of Soobramoney's who was known as a good public speaker acted as Master of Ceremonies.

The essential function of the crowd was to witness the marriage and to show their approval, and in return they had to be well entertained. The westerner is somewhat disconcerted by the scant attention paid by the public to the ritual itself, and by the distraction of the music and display.

The Sandanum

The time had come for the last *nelengu* and boy and girl sat side by side. Again white rice, betel leaf, betel nut and a coin were placed under a long stool. On another three-legged stool, known

¹ Binding a yellow cloth, with a coin round any object is the usual sign of taking a vow.

as *mookala* were the necessary ingredients – a small brass bowl with sandalwood paste, another with *allum*, and a tray with betel leaves and nuts. The groom entered first led by the bride's brother described as *thoyee poola* (best man) and then came the bride led by the groom's sister, *thoyee penoo* (bridesmaid). They all circled the canopy three times, raising their hands in prayer at each corner; putting the right foot first as instructed by the priest, they entered the *poo-pandal* and sat on the stool with their faces to the east. Five or seven married women from both families anointed them lightly on both cheeks with the paste and circled them with the red water, and with a penny on a tray with a lighted camphor. The couple reciprocated by giving each woman a betel leaf and betel nut. The anointing over, they went together to the seven pots of water and lit a camphor in front of each while the priest chanted his prayers.

The groom's close kin brought in trays with wedding clothing for the bride, groom, bridesmaid and bestman and after this was blessed by the *progidur*, they went to dress. Salatchie's sari, which she saw for the first time, was a beautiful cloth of pink and gold – white is the colour of widowhood – and was very much admired. The greatest care was paid to her appearance and make-up, and she wore the jewellery given her at her engagement. The groom was finely attired, and on his head he wore a white turban tied in South Indian style, a sash over his shoulder and golden ornaments specially borrowed 'for luck'.

Marriage must only take place after a boy has passed through the order of Brahmacharya (training and celibacy) and to mark this the girl's mother brought for the groom a *poonool* (sacred cord).

The retinue repeated its ceremonial triple circling of the *pandal*, and when the couple were again seated the *progidur* slipped the *punul* over Soobramoney's left shoulder reciting the necessary *mantras*. Then he tied a ring of *dharba* grass round the ring finger of girl and boy and a bangle with a turmeric stick (again known as *kanganum*) round the right wrist of the groom and the left wrist of the boy. Inevitably the main part of the marriage ceremony opened with the

part of the marriage ceremony opened with the young couple performing a *pooja* to Ganessa. The *progidur* recited the sixteen Ganessa *mantras* while the couple dropped petals before the symbol of the god. They performed *pujas* to the *holsum* and to the *garagam*. The groom's mother gave a gift known as *mami kurri* consisting of a tray with a sari, betel leaf, money and flowers to the bride's parents (or sometimes to the oldest married brother and his wife). This was a preliminary to the ritual of *thare vako* (girl vow).

Vows

The father of the girl and of the boy stood beside their children and Salatchie's father put his hand on his daughter's, who laid hers on her future husband's and he in turn rested his on his father's. The *progidur* dropped water on their hands and Salatchie's father promised 'I give my daughter to your son', which gift Soobramoney's father agreed to accept. In former times this was followed by *paddepoose* (leg worship) in which the groom washed the legs of his future father-in-law with milk and with water.

Vows made by the parents were followed by public vows by the couple under the direction of the *progidur*. The Tamilian vows have many variants, and this particular *progidur* made the couple repeat after him – 'Know ye all wise men and women who are seated here, that we vow to enter married life with our own will and desire, may our hearts be united and cool as the fresh water and the air that keeps us alive, so that we vow to be kind to each other in our married life.' The couple circled within the canopy, their hands raised in prayer and the bridegroom then garlanded the bride and the bride garlanded the groom.

Achman

When the girl and boy had exchanged vows the *progidur* gave the couple water with which to wash their hands and to sip before performing *achman* – the rite of purification by water. The groom took a spoonful in the palm of his right hand and sipped three times, he did the same in

the left hand, then with the first and third finger of his right hand, he touched his nostril, eyes, ears and shoulders and sprinkled a little over his head. The bride did likewise.

Fire Ritual (*Egium*)

After *achman* they performed an elaborate *egium* (ritual of purification by fire). Into the sacred flame lit from a lighted camphor, the groom and the bride following instruction by the *progidur*, dropped dry mango twigs, dipped in ghee, and *nava thanium* (nine types of roasted grain). The *progidur* recited a stereotyped *mantra* of '108 words'.

The Tali

After the vows and the *egium*, all was ready for the central rite, the tying on of the *tali*, the insignia of marriage. The *tali* is a little gold ornament tied on a cotton dyed yellow in turmeric. *Talis* are in two shapes according to caste and since Soobramoney was a Chetty, his wife's *tali* was a *thoppatali* - a round disc with a slight depression in the middle, 'resembling a stomach with a navel'. A second type of *tali* is the *lingam tali*, and the *lingam* is the phallic symbol of Shiva.¹

The *tali* had previously been tied round a coconut and placed on a brass tray. The *progidur* handed the tray, to which he added a lighted camphor, to married kinsmen to touch and worship, whereafter he showed it to all the people who stood up and raised their hands in benediction. The groom's sister, brought a lighted house-lamp (*kamatchee velaku*) and stood with it and a bowl of red water behind Salatchie. The *progidur* then handed the *tali* to Soobramoney, Salatchie bowed her head, Soobramoney stood in front of her, pressed his right big toe on her left big toe and tied the *tali* round her neck 'with gold resting on her heart'.² The groom secured the *tali* with a triple knot 'representing Brahma, Vishnu and Siva Ridru - the Creator, the Sustainer and the One who takes away in the end'. The *progidur* put holy ingredients onto the knots and prayed that the marriage should last forever.

¹ According to one *progidur*, the *tali* was once the tooth of the tiger which a young man had to kill to prove his strength and courage, required of him as a husband.

The Blessing

The tying of the *tali* was followed by public blessing of the young people. Rice, yellowed in turmeric, confetti and petals were distributed to the guests who came to the canopy and sprinkled the couple and wished them happiness. The couple exchanged garlands to symbolize their new unity and this was followed by *seshe* in which three (or five) elderly married people pick up the rice from under the stool and sprinkle it on the couple, and touch their knees, head and palms with it. Salatchie's new sister-in-law (any close female relative of her husband's would have sufficed) knotted the end of the bride's sari to the groom's sash and into the fold put flowers, rice, money and the coconut round which the *tali* had been wound.

Ring Giving

Thus 'bound together', the groom led the bride to the grinding stone and on the second toe of both of her feet, he put the *mingee*, a narrow silver ring. Formerly the bride's brother also put a toe ring on the groom, and in turn received a finger ring. One ring used also to be dropped into a bowl of turmeric water and the young couple were told to 'play about together in the water' and see who would find it first. The play was supposed to 'break down shyness' and 'mix the couple together'. While her foot was on the stone the *progidur* told the bride to turn her eyes in the direction of the brightly shining sun. In the past marriages were celebrated at night, and the bride was told to gaze at the star, *Arundati*. This rite is explained through mythology. The wife of a sage, Gautama, was unfaithful and was turned into a stone as punishment. On the other hand the wife of a sage, Vasishta, retained her virtue in spite of temptations and was blessed by being transformed into the ever bright *Ārunthuthi* - the Pole-star. By placing her foot on the stone and gazing up at the star, each newly-wed wife indicates her intention of checking evil desires and concentrating on purity and fidelity.

² The toe action is not performed by the *lingam tali* group.

When the couple returned to the stool after the ring giving, the bride and groom changed places. The bride instead of the groom sat on the left; the authority over the bride was shown to have moved from her father to her husband.

A friend of the young couple sang a *mangalam*, a song of good wishes composed specially for the occasion. The *mangalam* was written out and regarded as an important wedding gift; there could have been more than one *mangalam*.

The Feast

The public part of the ceremony was over and the people could be fed the delicious food prepared for the main marriage feast. No flesh could be eaten, and the meal consisted of seven different kinds of vegetable curry, and ended with tapioca boiled soft with milk, almond and sugar (i.e. 'something to sweeten the mouth'). The food was served on freshly cut banana leaves and eaten with the fingers according to tradition, and as usual men, women and children sat separately.

During the feasting, the groom and the bride remained under the canopy to receive stereotyped gifts. Close relatives led by Soobramoney's mother tied round the forehead of the groom and of his bride *patum*, a small gold piece about 2" long by 1½" wide. Following the *patum* came *varse* (gifts) of clothing and jewellery, on *thathoo* (tray).

Ceremonial Gift Giving

The first *varse* known as *sambandha varse* was from the groom's parents to the bride's parents, and consisted of five trays, one with clothing, one with betel nut and betel leaves, one with fruit, one with coconuts and one with sweetmeats. Thereafter the bride's relatives brought *varse* for the bride, and the groom's for the groom. The most important were the gifts from their respective maternal uncles and the girl's consisted of 9 *tathoo*, the boy's of 11 (i.e. an uneven number). Each maternal uncle is privileged to present *varse*, but the order of presentation is by seniority. Married maternal uncles gave their *varse* independently, the unmarried gave jointly. Had none been married their mother would take the *varse*

on their behalf, for the trays are always carried by women. The *progidur* announced the relationship of the donor of each *varse* and the number of *thathoo*. Gifts from the bride's kin always include something – a shirt, a tie or a pair of socks – for the groom, and *vice versa*. Formerly all gifts from the bride's kin to the bride were taken by her parents after she had chosen a few articles, and similarly the groom's parents took the bulk of his *varse*. Nowadays all *varse* belong to the young couple.

In addition to *varse* is *moyi* – gifts of money – which may, but need not necessarily, be given by donors of *varse*, and which may be often given by friends or relatives not obliged to give *varse*. *Moyi* is still usually taken by the parents of the party to whom it is specifically given and used to defray the heavy wedding expenses, but *moyi* given jointly to the couple is kept by them. Particulars of donors, amounts, and relationship are carefully written down, and are regarded as 'credit without interest'. When similar affairs take place in the donors' homes, the former recipients are in duty bound to reciprocate and this principle is adhered to very rigidly. The gift giving is explicitly recognized as both bringing about and expressing relationship. It indicates the strength of family ties, and prestige is attached to the giver and recipient of many *thathoo* and much *moyi*.

When the last gifts had been received, and the couple again blessed with rice, they went to 'plant the seed'.

Palligay (Seed Planting)

Salatchie was given a pot with *pala thanium* (the seeds from the five clay bowls) and Soobramoney a hoe, rake and the *asamikaal* (i.e. foundation of the *pandal*). Accompanied by a few close kin, they went to a swampy field (or river bank) nearby where Soobramoney dug up a little soil, and, prompted by one of the men, asked Salatchie for the seeds. (Formerly the groom would have been very shy and unable to talk). As she gave them to him, the people cracked jokes, not obscene jokes, but significant jokes, and one of

the women made the noise of a baby crying.¹ When Soobramoney had planted the seeds and raked over the soil, Salatchie brought him water to wash, and food to eat. The significance of this, as an informant commented, was obvious: 'The man must be industrious and the woman must care and bear for him'. The rite is known as *Palligay*.

Before returning to the groom's home, the party went to the temple where the groom broke the *holsum* coconut as offering. (This offering may be made by the *progidur*, or the coconut may be broken at the threshold of the groom's home and eaten by the children).

Reception at Groom's Home

When the party arrived at the groom's home, they found, as they had expected, that the door of the house was locked, and his sister (sometimes the bride's brother) sang from behind it, "if you want to come in, you must give me your daughter - then you may enter". Came the reply "I'll give you a place to live, plates from which to eat, I'll give you elephants for transport, but I can't give you my daughter". Only when they agreed to the request did she open the door, and then they entered, right foot first.

The couple sat side by side on a mat and the groom's sister handed the groom a glass of milk, (which is usually mixed with banana). Having first sipped a little himself he handed the rest to the bride, who sipped from the same vessel. This sharing of food and vessel is considered the symbol of greatest intimacy. It was the first food they had eaten that day and thereafter they had lunch together.

Reception at Bride's Home

From the groom's home, the couple accompanied by the bride's relatives went to her home where she was to remain for five days, the period dictated in her particular case by the almanac. (Sometimes convenience overrules custom, but fear is the price of going counter to the stars). This period, known a *marivoonal* from *mari*

¹ In some weddings this takes place after the tying of the *tali*.

'again' - *voonal* 'to eat', can be translated as 'a second feast'. The groom is honoured and introduced to members of the girl's family, and instructed in the responsibilities of a married man to his in-laws. Some informants speak of this period as 'a honeymoon'.

Five days later, at a time pointed out as auspicious, three people, male and female, went to her home to fetch back the young couple. Some of her relatives and a few neighbours were waiting for the new guests, who were treated with much respect and sumptuously fed. (Meat was permitted on this day). The women sat in the house, on the floor, the men sat outside on chairs.

Departure

The departure of the bride was very prolonged. She was supposed to leave at 2 p.m. but when at 2 p.m. there were no signs even of dressing her for her departure, the groom's people began to exert their authority. Soobramoney's father's brother's wife took the lead in this, and asked them to hurry, to which Salatchie's father's sister replied jokingly "if you want the girl you will have to wait". The remark expressed the underlying antagonism between in-laws. The girl had become the possession of the groom's family. They had been polite enough to permit her to stay at her mother's till 2 p.m., advantage had been taken of that kindness and now they were entitled to express resentment. They, as the groom's group, had to impress their position on the bride's group, or they would fall in their esteem. There was no verbal battle, but a firmness of intention on their part, while the girl's people, knowing they had lost their claim over the girl, were also aware that the marriage had not yet been consummated and so made a last stand for her independence. Throughout marriage this attitude continues between the *samendi* (parents of the couple); it is an undercurrent of antagonism veiled with kindness and exaggerated respect. Finally the bride went to dress; she must arrive at her husband's home in clothes and jewels acquired since childhood and provided by her own family.

While she was dressing relatives of both groups

indulged in a mild mock battle. Salatchie's sisters and cousins, mainly the unmarried brought out some Johnson's Baby powder and threw it at the groom and other young men in his group to 'make fun with them'. In some homes *koongam* (red colouring matter) is used, and clothes are spoiled and faces and limbs and hair are messed about, and this may lead to quarrelling though the 'mock fight' should be taken with good humour.

When the bride was ready, her father's sister (i.e. a married woman from her own family) meticulously placed on her forehead the red dot of wifehood.

She and the groom were then called into her parent's room where her family elders were gathered. The young couple went first to her paternal grandmother, and the bride knelt with her hands and knees on the ground and the groom lay flat,¹ while the old lady gave her blessing and handed the young couple betel leaf and nut. They prostrated themselves before other elders,² and finally before her parents who with great tenderness and sadness wished them happiness.

The bride tied into a little bundle the betel leaves and nuts and money given by her kin, and her parents gave a stereotyped gift known as *poti varse*. This is a 'box' (*poti*) containing household goods – a house lamp, a brass tray, a brass vessel, *amat*, pillow cases, cooking utensils, and a full range of groceries. They also gave some clothes for the groom and the bride; had they been wealthy, they might also have given her a bedroom suite – the most popular wedding present from the girl's kin. In some cases the groom also 'steals' a small brass pot – a ritual theft, showing he 'was part of the home'.

The final parting of the girl from her kin was very sad. One by one her relatives bade her good-bye, embracing her and kissing her on both cheeks, wiping her tears and asking her not to cry, telling her that she was not going far. The little children some of them not knowing what it was all about and seeing Salatchie cry, howled. The parents wept quietly.

¹ These two kinds of *namascaram* or greeting are known respectively as *panjangum namascaram* (knee greeting) and *sashtange namascaram* (flat greeting).

² One old lady, the sister of Salatchie's paternal

Finally Salatchie got into a car which Soobramoney had borrowed, and drove away, while the girl's kin remained to comfort her parents. Everyone praised the girl, and said how industrious she was, and how she had helped with the little ones, and how obedient and kind she was, and how her mother would miss her. They were critical of close kin who had not come to show their kinship loyalty. A few of the closest relatives stayed for a couple of days to comfort the mother, and while away her sorrow.

On arrival at the groom's home, the couple were welcomed by his sister but before bringing them in she took *allum* three times round their faces then poured it on the ground. That evening Soobramoney's mother offered a special prayer for family happiness, health and increase. The bride's brother was asked to open the gift box, of which he had the key, and a fee of five shillings was his reward. The bride was gradually introduced into her new life. For the first few days she was not supposed to do much work, nor could she do anything without permission. Friends dropped in to see her and welcome her, and she slept in a room with Soobramoney's unmarried sisters.

First Intercourse

The night for the first intercourse had to be determined as auspicious by the *Panchang*. Fruits and sweetmeats were brought into the groom's room and his sister told Salatchie that hence forth she must sleep there. The next morning the young couple bathed. Soobramoney's sister put oil on the bride's hair and on his, and his mother marked her new daughter-in-law's forehead with a red dot of wifehood. Formerly she would have had her arms and perhaps her face tattooed soon after marriage, but this custom has almost fallen away in the town.

The First Three Months

For three months the couple remained at the groom's home and were not allowed to sleep anywhere. The grandmother refused her blessing and later explained that it was because she was a widow. When we pointed out that her sister was also widowed, she replied tolerantly – 'that is her wish'.

where else, but had the month of *Ardimassum* fallen within these three months, Salatchie would have had to return alone to her mother's home. There is the belief that a child conceived in the month of *Ardimassum*, and hence born in the month of *Sitrimassum*, the beginning of the Tamilian New Year, would be a criminal.

In the third month both went again on a formal visit to Salatchie's home for her to receive from her mother a further insignia of wifehood - the *gunda*, two golden ornaments, one on each side of the *tali*, provided by her husband. The yellow cotton on which the *tali* had been tied, was replaced by Soobramoney (since he was able to afford it) with a golden cord. When her mother tied

on the *gunda* (also shaped according to caste), she prayed in front of the lamp for her daughter's happiness. Soobramoney stayed only for that one night, Salatchie stayed three. The *tali* and *gunda* are the sacred sign of marriage and must never be exposed to any man other than the husband and must be removed on his death.

After three days, Salatchie was again fetched to her in-laws. The ritual of departure was less elaborate. She was now fully recognized as Soobramoney's wife. She could only visit her parents with her in-laws permission, though they could come and visit her, and for the birth of her first child she would return to the maternal home and the care of her own people.

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THE NYAMA SOCIETY OF THE IBIBIO WOMEN

M. D. W. JEFFREYS *

SYNOPSIS

Among many of the Ibibio of south-eastern Nigeria there exists a society of women known by various names, of which Nyama is that around the Government station of Ikot Ekpene where investigations on this society were carried out. Among the Ibibio the belief exists that clitoridectomy aids in child-bearing. This operation, together with body cicatrization, takes place shortly before marriage and after menstruation is well established. It is the function of this society to see that this mutilation is carried out. The mutilation is done by the leader of the local branch of the Nyama society. Girls who have had children before this ceremony are debarred from it and in this way the ceremony has a social value in checking promiscuity. The regalia of the society is described and the fees payable and the duties and obligations due from various members including the bridegroom. After this mutilation the brides are steadily fattened prior to making a public debut and parading naked before going off as wives to their respective husbands. A description of one such parade of brides is given, and mention is made of the decrease of this mutilation and the fading away of these societies under the impact of Christianity.

The Ibibio tribe, about a million strong, is situated on the right bank of the Cross river in the Calabar province of southern Nigeria and Nyama is the name of a guild or society of Ibibio women whose duty it is to preside over the initiation of unmarried, nubile girls just prior to their marriage. Nyama is an Ibibio word for singer, and is the name for this society at Ikot Ekpene Government station. This society is known as *Okom mbubo* among the Anan and as *Ikun* among the Ududu Ikpe villages situated some twenty miles north of Ikot Ekpene Government station. The society is also sometimes called *Ndam* around Ikot Idaha and *Uso* in other parts of Ibibio.

Dr. Meek's comment on the word *Nyama* runs as follows: "*Nyama* is no doubt the same name as that of the West African high god (Creator, Earth deity, etc.) which occurs as *Nyama*, *Yama*, *Ama* etc. The Nyama society appears to be primarily concerned with fertility." (1) Among the Ibibio it is believed that clitoridectomy, or extirpation of the *clitoris* aids child-bearing and hence has a fertility significance. Performing this operation is

one of the tasks of the Nyama society. This society is not found throughout the Ibibio. Thus among the Ibibio of the Eket division this mutilation is unknown to some and with others the operation is done symbolically. Old chief Udo Eket had not even heard of the practice and answered my enquiry by saying: "We consider our women to be very tender creatures and not meant to be ill-treated like that." From the pantomime that follows it seems that clitoridectomy was at one time practised among these Ekets but is now dying out. Thus in some villages in Eket the girl is placed in the posture for the operation, the *clitoris* is then touched with the iron razor but no cutting is done. The Ibibio name for this organ is *eyen itit* or child of the *vulva*.

Nubile girls awaiting this ceremony and as yet un mutilated go by the name of *ndisime* and on public occasions, or when trading in the markets wear only a small bit of cloth, known by the name of *akpaka*. The bride after making her debut is entitled to wear a full-length loin cloth, an *esin ofon*, as befits a married woman. Among the Eket

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and the Anag the girl, for three nights prior to entering the fattening room, is allowed to sleep with her future husband. This practice is not found elsewhere.

The operation is performed when, some time after puberty, the girl is considered nubile and just before she enters the fattening period of seclusion prior to being married. It is customary for all nubile Ibibio girls of the same clan grouping to be married publicly on the same day. (2) Among the Ibo, where clitoridectomy is performed shortly after birth, the nubile girl undergoes body cicatrization the year before she is married. This decoration is there known as *mbubu*. The technical expression of doing this cicatrization among the Ibibio is *koŋ ŋkɔ* (to raise lumps). They are usually incised on the first day that the girl enters the fattening house.

Among the Ibibio this scarification follows the clitoridectomy and is called *mbobi*. It is clear that the words *mbubu* and *mbobi* have a common origin. Goldie says, *mbobi* means circumcision and is applied to both sexes. (3) Those women who have not undergone this mutilation are referred to in the local slang as, *afu asaja anyan* = you walk long. The slang for an uncircumcised male is, *afu asaja utun* = you walk a worm. The idea is that the penis with its foreskin resembles the local earthworm which is 12" - 15" in length. The polite expression for either sex un mutilated is *erut*.

The Aro Ibo, who captured the Ibibio great tribal shrine, known to the Ibibio as *Ibritam* and to the Europeans as the *Long Juju*, do not all follow Ibo practice in this matter but Ibibio custom by performing the operation on their nubile girls just before marriage. This change in the Aro custom is found among the Obinikita group and can be attributed to the Ibibio women whom the Aro men took as wives when they became the great peddlers of Ibibio slaves, for Ibibio was the preserve of the Obinikitas.

Among many Negro tribes nakedness is a protective device because a man meeting a naked woman in public knows that she is tabu to him. There are thus three types of naked women, widows still in mourning, the wives of kings, and virgins or unmarried women. Among the Ibibio,

however, though the unmarried girl goes nude virginity *qua* virginity is of no great moment among them.

I recollect one day in 1926 in the Ikot Ekpene Government office a young nubile girl came weeping to me holding a piece of string with two little bits of wood attached and dragging a reluctant youth. She explained that though she had bought from an itinerant Hausa this contraceptive girdle it had not worked and she was now pregnant and unmarried and what was she to do?(4)

Only virgins and those who have never made the mistake of giving birth to a child, an aborted pregnancy is no bar, are allowed to pass through the hands of this society and to undergo the operation of clitoridectomy and to have the *ŋkɔ* or body cicatrization - the sign of blameless maidenhood - raised upon their skins. Such maidens are respectable members of society and hence are entitled to a public marriage ceremony. This group of young women is known as the *ŋka iferi* where *ŋka* - age-group and *iferi* = naked. An unmarried mother is prevented by the Nyama from undergoing clitoridectomy, body cicatrization, the fattening process and taking part in the public ceremony of parading, with the brides-to-be, naked in the market on the day of marriage. Such a girl is immediately made to wear the full length loin cloth of a married woman. Girls who are thus debarred are stigmatized by the term *uwok* among the Anag, and as *erut* among the Ibibio and means "uncircumcised" for the term is used of males also.

Ribald songs are sung of the *ŋka iferi* because of the sexual licence allowed them in this age-group. A light-skinned *ŋka iferi* puts a price on the things she sells. Says she, singing: "I have something to sell, it costs so much. When a man hears he thinks it is the price of the stockfish I am selling. Doesn't he know it is really the price of myself." Another song runs as follows: "Oh Adiaha Oduogo (name of a girl) lend me a basket: Oh Adiaha Oduogo lend me a basket. I thought you went into the bush to gather some palm nuts, but you left the nuts and went off to some one's house. Oh, Adiaha Oduogo lend me a basket that I too may gather some nuts."

Among the Ibo the same standard is observed. Thus Thomas (1913, 70) writing of the sexual licence permitted to young Ibo girls says: "When she conceives, which they are usually careful to avoid doing till they have received their body marks, the girl goes to her husband and the boy looks out for another friend." (5)

Robins about a hundred years ago gave a good account of how this cicatrization is performed which I reproduce as being the only detailed one known to me and though, I have myself on occasions seen young girls undergoing the operation, I have never, owing to the pressure of official duties, been able to watch the process through. Robins (1867, V, 87) writes: "Some of the Ibo women are elaborately cut all over the body in well formed designs. The barber is generally the man of cunning hand. He first places a small cow's horn on the part to be cut, and with his mouth sucks the air out through a small hole at the end of the horn, which performance of course cups the flesh, whilst with his tongue he places a cotton plug upon the small hole. The horns five or six in number, remain standing out from the body, sustained by the flesh cupped into them; they are then removed, and the pattern cut with a very poor knife; the flesh is recupped, and after five minutes removed, each containing a clot of blood the size of the yolk of a duck's egg; the horns are again applied, and a second yolk of blood is drawn; the operator then with his finger rubs into the cuts a little palm-oil and soot, causing very little pain to the girl. During the operation, several girls sing to keep up the courage of the vain one, who thinks her attractions are greatly enhanced. The charge is twenty cowries each horn, equal to our farthing. According to this ratio, a woman can be highly illustrated with cuts for one thousand cowries, equal to one shilling." (6) However girls with much scarification are avoided by men, who say that a girl who can stand that amount of pain and suffering is too difficult to manage. A beating has no effect on her. I reproduce, by kind permission of Dr. Dalrymple, who took the photograph of this Mbembe woman, British Cameroons, the striking effect that a skilled artificer can produce on the human skin (Fig. Ia.)

The day on which the final assessing of the *lobolo* is payable by the bridegroom is called *nywa unen*. Thereafter the clitoridectomy of the bride takes place and she now enters (*duk mbobo*) the fattening room. To place her in it is *sin nykwuho*. Fig. I shows such brides after they have been fattened. They are called *nywan nykwuho* by the Efik and *eyen mbobi* by the Ibibio. The fattening process is under the care of the girl's mother and at the cost of her prospective husband. The girl I saw was secluded in a room – called the fattening room or house and there, lying in palm oil and allowed no exercise, she is steadily fed with fattening foods. During this process the body cicatrization takes place. It is usually begun on the first day that the girl enters upon her seclusion. The cicatrization is known as *nyko* and the girl is then called an *mbobi* until she is married. Fig. II exhibits two examples copied from life.

The Nyama society has a special insignia of which the characteristic feature is the wearing on the right side of the head above the ear, of one half of the lower jaw-bone of a dog. One of these women, on turning Christian, gave her box and its contents to me and explained the use of each article as follows: A locally made, carved wooden box (Fig. III) with a lid, and called *Okpugo Uso* or box of the craft or guild. It was 9" × 4" × 4" and in it she kept her insignia. The contents of this box are displayed in Fig. IV, namely:

1. A necklet of twisted raffia fibre about half an inch thick, dyed red and called – the *Okon ndam*.
2. A small quantity of loose raffia fibres (*ndam*) also dyed red.
3. A bit of locally made twine attached at each end to the lower jaw-bone of a dog. The circlet being large enough to slip onto the head, the *Okpono Nyama* or *Nyama* snood.
4. Two spare dog jaw-bones.
5. A small, baked-clay pot, the *abay idem*.
6. An operating knife or razor, the *udion*.
7. Two white quartz pebbles, the *itiat uso*.
8. A stick of friable yellow stuff (*nsei*) which, when crumbled between the fingers, is used as a powder for dabbing on the forehead.

9. A carved piece of stick with a human head on it. It is called an *eyensek* or suckling babe or sometimes *udɛy Nyama* the *Nyama* paddle.
10. A pot rest of fibre.

The above are the essentials.

The society is open to women of all ages. Some join it because they are childless, some because they are rich, some because they are advised to do so by an *Idion* man or diviner. In such cases it is usual for the husband to pay the expenses of his wife to join. Having done so he will sing, *mebo udion nɔ ɣwan mi* = I have bought *Udion*, (the name of the razor used for the clitoridectomy) for my wife. Such a woman is not supposed to desert her husband or to commit adultery. If she is found guilty of such malpractice she is expelled from the society. When an *Nyama* member dies this razor is buried with her or if not, it is placed in her *okpugo uso* or wooden box and this at her *Ikpo* or funeral wake is then placed at her *nduoyo* or burial memorial.

The oldest member of the society in any village is *ipso facto* the local head of the society. There does not appear to be any single recognized head for the totality of members. Such a local head is called *ete nyama*. This title is strange because *ete* means 'father' and one would have expected *eka*, meaning 'mother', to be the title for the head of a woman's society. The fees for membership amount to about ten pounds and include the payment of four goats to the *ete nyama* on behalf of the members. The candidate is then told to prepare a feast for the members, to provide palm wine and an *ikut*, tortoise, and 200 manillas, the local horse-shoe money whose value in 1922, when these notes were taken down, was two pence. If the candidate is an unmarried woman the members proceed to her father's place for the feast, if married then to her husband's house. The members arrive fully dressed in their insignia. The circlet of twine and dog's jaw-bone is worn on the head with the jaw-bone above the right ear. The necklet of red dyed raffia is worn round the neck and each member carries her little wooden doll.

The members' bodies are naked from the waist up and their trunks are daubed over with the

marks of the open palm of a human hand which has been dipped into a decoction of pulped green leaves. This mess is called *okukun*. On reaching the candidate's domicile three cow horns, used as trumpets, are sounded to announce their arrival. They bring with them a little pottery water-pot around the neck of which has been tied a couple of the green fronds from the oil palm. They then rub the girl's body and the box in which her insignia will be kept, with a yellow powder, called *nsei* and while doing so sing some such song as the following which happens to come from the village of Nyara Nyin in the *Ikot Ekpene* division. "Who will take away the bride's *ndem*¹ water-pot. Oh, who takes the pot away? It is father who will take from the bride her *ndem* water-pot. Oh, who takes away the water-pot? It is mother who takes away the bride's *ndem* water-pot. Who takes away the bride's water-pot? It is sister who takes away the bride's *ndem* water-pot". The question is sung solo, and the reply by a chorus. At the end of the song all these relatives each hand over a manilla to the *Nyama*. In a song further on the words of the song insist on payments of manillas. Ten fowls are sacrificed at night at a previously selected spot where are now planted an *Okono* (*Dracaena fragrans*) tree and a *Nuɣ* tree. This spot now becomes for the new member her *isu Abasi uso* (shrine of the skygod on the father's side). The new member is thereby enrolled.

I feel that there is more than this brief statement to the enrolment but I could obtain no further information.

Each village group of the *Nyama* has its own *ndem*, presiding spirit, known as *Nya Ama*. Should a mother and child fall ill and the child die, the illness of the mother is often attributed to this *ndem* troubling her. One of the prescribed cures for an *Nya* affection, also called *ɲkpo idem*, or for barrenness, is to indulge in the sexual relationship known as *udɔ*. This relationship is generally practised only on the advice of an *idion*, and is a form of sanctioned adultery. The woman, with her husband's connivance, has sexual relations with a person selected and approved by the husband.

¹ Is an ancestral spirit. Each lineage has its own *ndem* or protecting ancestral spirit.

band. That this union is not a normal one and is fraught with danger to the contracting parties is seen by the precautions taken beforehand to appease the *Ekpo* or ancestral wardens of the tribe's customs. Before entering on the cure it is necessary to sacrifice at the *isu ekpo*, altar of the ancestors, two fowls provided by the man selected to have intercourse with the sick woman. One fowl is to protect the man and the other the woman from the wrath of the ancestral spirits. The husband usually selects one of his friends for the honour of curing his wife of the *Nya* sickness. Intercourse between these two must not occur in the homestead of the husband otherwise the protection afforded by the sacrifice of the two fowls would be lost, though while undergoing the cure the woman remains in her husband's homestead, attends to him and his wants and prepares food for both him and the selected friend. Both men eat the food in the husband's house. Such a man is known as an *udo idem*, whereas an ordinary male paramour is just *udo*. The woman is now referred to as *nyan idem* or *nyan udo*. The woman does not refer to him as *udo idem* but either as *eyen ufok mi*, child of my house, or as *nsay mi*, my servant. He addresses her as *eka ufok*, mother of the house. If the woman is modest and bashful she will use the first expression in referring to him so that people will not be aware of the real situation. The husband will on various nights direct his wife to sleep with this friend in the friend's homestead. She does not go every night, nor is there any prohibition placed on the husband sleeping with his wife. The woman is considered cured when she conceives. The *udo idem* usually makes a present of palm wine to the husband for the pleasure of sleeping with his wife.

This custom may lead to trouble. Sometime ago while a woman was undergoing such a cure her husband was sentenced to six months hard labour for malicious wounding in a market fight. On his release he found his hut in ruins, his kitchen garden neglected, his pigs lost and his goats straying. His wife now preferred to remain with the man with whom she was cohabiting for the cure rather than return to her husband. Failing to persuade her to return he killed such goats as

belonged to her. She in terror fled to her parents. The husband returned the next day to the house of his friend intent on killing either his wife or this friend. Finding neither in the house he slew the three young children of his friend and it fell to me to try him for murder.

The *Anantia* season or the time for the fattening of the brides begins about July. The parents of these girls who in their opinion, are mature enough for marriage which is round about the seventeenth year of the girl, now announce that their daughters are ready. A special day is proclaimed then by the *Nyama* society as that on which *Anantia* begins. The girls who are thus due to be married this season make the necessary preparations. The *Nyama* members now parade in public in their insignia for an *odut* or an *Ibibio* week of eight days during which time they attend no markets.

Dwa Dwa, an *Ibibio* woman from *Ibiaku Ikot Edet*, gave the following information. Such a girl goes into the bush to cut a number of sticks, all of the same kind. Returning home she pounds them with a thick billet of wood till they are soft and stringy. She then dries them. Then tying them into small bundles she presents one to her future husband and to her friends who hand over to her a manilla. The girl now arranges for a large supply of firewood – the *ifa mbobi* – to provide the fuel for cooking food with which she is being fattened. It is customary for the bridegroom to collect this firewood. He, with his age-group, collects these faggots and stacks them by the road side, *ifak idun*, leading to the girl's abode. The size of the stack is a public demonstration of his industry. I saw a huge pile in one place and was told it was the fuel supply for one girl. No burnt or charred wood may be included in this wood pile. The wood must be dead-wood untouched by fire. This wood pile may be cut from the following trees only, *Ukay*, *Mpenek* (*Uapaca guineensis*) and *Akpa* (*Macaranga Barteri*). The girl's mother takes firewood from the pile as and when needed. The girl now proceeds to clean and polish the floors of her future husband's house and of her parent's house. Herein she is assisted by other girls. These floors are first treated with wood ashes and water and left to dry.

Then the floors are rubbed with green leaves till they attain a high degree of polish, black in colour.

A member of the Nyama society, either the *Ete Nyama* or some member selected by the girl, now performs the operation in the home of the girl's mother. Usually only two or three persons are present other than the girl and her mother as the operation is regarded as a secret affair. The operator employs a native-made razor used in shaving. This razor is also used by women if called on to do a male circumcision. If the male circumcision is done by a male operator he does not use a razor but his ordinary palm-wine tapping, iron chisel. The girl must not make a sound during the operation. If she cries out she is disgraced by being made the butt of ribald songs in the surrounding markets. Consequently during the operation there is much loud singing by the members of the society. Hence the origin of the name. The little bit of flesh is thrown away, no special significance is attached to it.

Malcolm states that the operation is performed among the Efiks of Calabar at the end, not at the beginning, of the fattening process. He writes: "A piece of coconut shell is shaved very thin and a hole bored through. The *glans clitorides* is drawn through this hole and cut off with a sharp knife or splinter of glass." (7) So far as I am aware this coconut technique is not used among the Ibibio. There is very little bleeding and thereafter the girl wears a small loin-cloth in front and continues her daily occupations as though nothing had happened and so no one is aware that the operation has been performed, though her father and her future husband are informed.

From the girl the operator receives, after the operation, a loin-cloth, a basket of yams, seven manillas, seven *mfobo* (an *mfobo* is a rack of dried, sardine like fish) and an *ikpo* or a calabash of palm oil worth about two or three manillas.

Three or four days later the Nyama society takes the girl to a screened enclosure near the road. There they rub her body with *nsei* or break eggs on her body. Thereafter the girl abstains from washing herself for a whole *odut* (the 8-day Ibibio week). After thus dealing with her the Nyama escort her back to her mother's house where a

feast awaits them. As the feasting begins the members of the Nyama society sing the following song: "The food chokes the child of the *idem* the food chokes, the palm wine chokes: so pay a *manilla*. The food chokes, the water chokes, so pay a *manilla*. The food chokes, the meat chokes, so pay a *manilla*. Oh the food chokes." When the feasting and the singing is over the girl is left with her mother. The mother presents these women with two or more fowls and the future husband gives them twenty manillas, a pot of palm wine and two yards of cloth. The cloth is coiled into an *ekara*, or head pad, to carry away the pot of palm wine. The cloth becomes the property of the leader of the Nyama.

An *odut* later the bridegroom and his age-group erect at the bride's abode a secluding fence at the back of the house. This fenced-off area is called *ɲkuk*. To-day this fence is often omitted but is symbolized by hanging a screen of raphia fibres before the door of the bride's room. On erecting this fence or screen, the husband-to-be provides a goat, called *ebut ekuk ndak* which is then sacrificed and eaten. He must also supply a special raffia-palm, mid-rib bed on which the girl sleeps. This fixed bed is called *ikuk* in Ibibio. The mat on which she reclines is called *aya*, while the ordinary sleeping and much softer mat, is called *ikan*. The bridegroom now hands to his parents-in-law a four gallon tin of palm oil. He also selects a woman whose duty it is to bath the girl morning and evening and then to rub her body with this palm oil.

The night before the girl enters the "fattening" house a play called *Uyot* is held at the bridegroom's house. He, wearing new clothes and accompanied by his friends, having first made an offering at the *Isu ukpon* (ancestral altar) starts to play and dance. The bridegroom now makes a contribution towards the payment of his *lobolo* in the form of yams and cloth. After the play is over he takes his bride to his own room where she stays the night. He may have sexual intercourse with her if she is willing but if she resists he may not persist. The next morning he takes his bride to her parent's and presents the mother with twenty manillas, palm wine and food.

The girl now enters the "fattening" house and is fed on fattening foods such as *mfobo*, snails (Achinata), maize meal, *egusi* (the seeds of *Citrulus vulgaris*). On the pathway leading to her abode and alongside the woodpile the bridegroom erects a large rack or tray of withies on which to display the empty *mfobo* racks, the empty snails shells as the bride consumes them day by day. In this manner the lavishness of the bridegroom is displayed before the public whereby he gains in prestige and honour and his bride in fatness. For about three months, the bride is not allowed to take any exercise other than lolling in the sun or strolling about inside the enclosed shelter. During this period a play or dance known as *Ewana* takes place one night at or near her parent's compound. Only naked women take part. Singing, eating, dancing and drinking continue through the night. No men may be present.

Towards the end of *Anantia* all the *mbobi* of the village make their debut in their village square on the same day. This public appearance is a preparation for the final parade as an *ɲka* or age-group on the common wedding day in one of the large local markets. On the day thus selected by the village the bridegroom brings as many cloths as he can afford to the village square of his bride. There he publicly hands them to his bride and presents two different cloths to the bride's mother.

The village brides are naked, except for a girdle of beads or hawk-bells, and with bodies shining from palm oil, they parade, dance and disport themselves for a while in the village square. Thereafter, accompanied by their mothers and maternal aunts, younger sisters and young female siblings they march off to the bridegroom's abode where a feast awaits them. The father of the bride does not attend and so the bridegroom takes care to send him a large pot of palm wine. The brides then, escorted by their mothers, return home. After this debut a day is fixed for the wedding day. On this day all the fattened girls of that year in the villages that normally attend a given market square

appear with their retinues, friends and acquaintances where are also assembled the prospective husbands, their retinue, relatives and friends.

On the 10th of August 1926 I had the opportunity of attending one of these mass marriages of the Ika group of villages, of the Anags in the Abak District of the Calabar Province, Southern Nigeria. In the forest there was a special clearing which was used once annually for the marriage ceremony of these *mbobi*. This square was called *urua mbobi* or the *mbobis'* market. In this forest clearing were a number of large trees with shrines or altars at their roots. At one end was a shed that housed a large *Ikuru* or wooden gong, roughly carved into the form of a man. There was one ceremonial entrance *iwut usun* which consisted of an arch with "medicines" tied to it. Through this archway which was guarded by the household men of the owner of the square, all brides had to pass and to pay a toll of 10 manillas for so doing, ordinary people paid two or three manillas. I was allowed to enter on payment of four manillas.

At the time of my arrival this square was deserted except for the drummer beating the *Ikuru* gong and some hooded vultures (*Necrosyrtes monarchus monarchus*) that were scavenging for morsels left from sacrifices performed earlier in the day at the foot of the large trees in, and surrounding, the square.

In this clearing was a large earth mound about ten feet high. Near it was a long frond of an oil palm planted in the ground and to it was tied a bunch of *eyei*.¹ At the foot of this warning and to enhance its power was placed a variety of "medicines". Near it lay a long, curved, sacred bundle composed of woven rattan and stuffed with "medicines". This bundle was some five feet long and a foot in diameter, tapering at either end. At one end, hanging by their legs were a number of fluffy, newly-hatched, white chickens. Their lower beaks were dangling because they had been severed with a knife at the gape from the upper bill. They were still fluttering their wings feebly in the slow process of dying. This bundle went by the

¹ *Eyeyi* is the name for the white leaves of the palm as they are found in the heart of the growing palm tuft or palm cabbage. They are a tabu sign and indicate that

any one who causes a disturbance must take all the consequences that ensue. The *eyeyi* can thus be interpreted as a peace signal.

name of *Ibok nduok*, and to it was tied a long forest liana.

Presently through the ceremonial entrance streamed a number of old women whose bodies had been whitened with *ndum* (kaolin clay) and dressed in *akpaya* or ragged, old, raffia cloth. Each carried a withy with a tuft of green leaves at the end. These they carried vertical and up above their heads. They entered singing a mournful air and at the double. After a run across the square to the *Ikuru* gong which they now circled they lowered their withies and trailing the leaves on the ground went off into the forest.

These women soon returned trailing their withies on the ground and I saw that there were four *idion* women present. The group now approached the *ibok nduok* and touched it with the leaves of their withies. The leading woman then addressed the *ibok nduok* but I was not able to find out what she said.

Through the ceremonial entrance now came a group of men clad, like the women in *akpaya* and protected with charms. Some had *nsei*, daubed on their faces. They also carried withies with tufts of leaves at the ends and they arrived holding these high in the air. Some were playing an *ntakrok*, or the small wooden gong. They made a circuit of the square and then assembled to dance round the *ibok nduok*. Each man then touched it and addressed it. Each man carried his "medicine" bag and sprinkled "medicine" about. The singing was mournful and dirge-like. One of these men wearing the *okpono* or *idion* headring tapped the *ibok nduok* with it and replaced it on his head.

Two men now picked up the *ibok nduok* one at each end. All the withies which till then had been trailing on the ground were now held vertical. The *ibok nduok* displayed the caperings and prancings of a wild beast and showed signs of becoming uncontrollable whereupon a third man grabbed the liana in an attempt to control this four-legged beast. After a few minutes of prancing and frisking part of the group of men and women ran off down a by-path into the forest. The *ikuru* gong was now being sounded with full force. The remaining men and women were then smeared by one of the

men with earth from the spot where the *ibok nduok* lay.

Presently the forest group returned but now the *ibok nduok* was dead. It was being dragged along on the ground and all withies were trailed and the song was on a mournful note. The procession dragged the *ibok nduok* to the foot of a large tree and assembled round it. Dancing round it a revival ceremony was performed and the *ibok nduok* became alive again with a man at either end and forcibly constrained by the third man with the liana. All withies were carried high. This group under the prancings and cavortings of the *ibok nduok* and its restrainer now proceeded to the ceremonial entrance whence had already entered the first *mbobi* and her retinue. Here the *ibok nduok* was laid on the ground, the withies trailed and the *ibok nduok* dragged along the earth back to the tree whence it was revived again and was then forcibly dragged off prancing and frisking. It did not appear upon the scene again.

The *mbobi* began to arrive in numbers now each with their retinue, bridesmaids and relatives. Each group proceeded to the *ikuru* drum where the bride did a *pas de seul*, offered up a sacrifice there, and then visited each shrine where the mother of the bride walking in front of her daughter scattered a little mash at the foot of each tree from a plate she carried.

The vultures promptly gobbled up the offering and this was as it should be because the vulture (*utere*) is regarded as a messenger of God (*usany Abassi*) and if these offerings were not thus eaten it would imply that the Supreme Being was not extending His favour to the person offering the sacrifice.

All these brides were naked except for a girdle of either hawk-bells or cowry shells with brass coils round their legs from ankle to thigh, a necklace of beads with a fluttering white chick dangling by its legs from it, and very variable hair styles.

The bridegrooms now began to assemble, and in groups with attendants marched round and round the square singing to the noise of beaten drums. The bridegrooms were dressed in every conceivable type of costume, from the 1 3 gaily-

coloured Madras loin-cloth to a European morning suit with collar, tie and squash hat.

After thus parading each bridegroom climbed to the top of the mound and declared the name, family and place of the bride he was that day marrying. Thereafter followed the carrying away of the bride on a man's shoulders, either on those of the bridegroom or upon some man specially paid for the task. The bride was carried to her father's abode.

When I left there were over ninety *mbobi* in the *Urua mbobi* and several thousands of people. At her father's house the bridegroom handed manillas to the young girls who had attended the bride in her seclusion and who had accompanied her to the market. To the bride's parents he also handed over gifts of manillas and of salt. The father then handed the bride to the bridegroom as his wife. If the bridegroom has not completed the payment of his *lobolo*, his father-in-law would break a stick and hand it to the husband as a reminder of the unpaid *lobolo*. The husband then touched his bride with a manilla on the forehead, chest, navel and other parts and took her away to his house.

Each *mbobi* on reaching her husband's house handed him a staff which is kept in his sleeping apartment. At his death these staves are placed in his *ngwomo* (funerary memorial). Hence the number of these staves displayed therein discloses the number of wives he had espoused. After reaching her husband's home and for some months afterwards she wears when she appears in public a sporan of raffia fibres. This garment is called *nyehe ibok mbobi* and is illustrated in Fig. V.

This then is the account of the average Ibibio maiden. An *Adiaha's*, or eldest daughter's, marriage is more complicated and the following points were noted.

Part of the *lobolo* handed over when a man weds an *Adiaha* is paid to the women of the girl's settlement, who assemble and sit in the *gwaa* or village square. The fee paid to these women is called *uban aywa*.¹ The bridegroom must also sacrifice an *ndu unen*² in the presence of his future mother-

in-law at her *Isu obot* (fertility shrine). Until this sacrifice is made she may not receive anything for herself from her future son-in-law, e.g. no food, no gifts, no share in the *lobolo*. If the *lobolo* is paid before the *ndu unen* is sacrificed the mother-in-law's share of the *lobolo* and gifts goes to the members of her family, i.e. to her brothers and sisters. After the *ndu unen* is sacrificed the mother-in-law may enjoy all her share of the *lobolo* and presents. The father-in-law is likewise under a similar tabu. To release him from it and to allow him to enjoy his share of the *lobolo* and gifts there must be sacrificed an *nkukim eron* or ram at the *Isu oboto* in his presence. If either parent-in-law makes personal use of any of the *lobolo* or gifts of food before these two sacrifices have been made it is believed that they will surely die.

The débüt of an *Adiaha* is celebrated by a feast known as *nsok eyen*. Both parents contribute to this feast. The mother provides a goat or goats and the father a cow or cows. The feast is held in public in the *aywa* or village square of the *mbobi* soon after she comes out of the fattening house and before she joins in the wedding parade of her year in a local market. At this parade the hides of the cattle consumed at her *nsok eyen* are displayed in token of the lavishness of her parents and in honour to her as an *Adiaha*. On the day that the *Adiaha* is thus paraded she should be taken by her husband to the head of his *ekpuk* (lineage) to receive a blessing from this head.

The following description of an *mbobi* ceremony comes from Ikot Ekpene and was given to me by the late Miss K. Shearman of the Methodist Mission. "On September the 27th. 1928 the *mbobi* went to the Ikot Ekpene market for their final display. They looked much the same as they did on their first parade on the 16th. of August. Their skins were painted in designs in black, long brass coiled anklets, clad only in beads, their hair done in an elaborate fashion and intertwined with bright coloured ribbons, held in position with large, fancy hair-pins. There were great crowds in the market where we noticed several women

¹ *Aywa* means the village square, while *uban* derives from the verb *ban*, to join a society, e.g. *amaban ekpo*, he joins or enters the *ekpo* society.

² The *ndu unen* is a grey or dun coloured fowl, not the type with ruffled feathers which is called *esaria*.

were carrying rolled up cowhides. These were exhibited to show that they had provided a really big feast by slaying a cow. Such feasts are provided only for the Adiaha, or eldest daughter.

"Drums were being beaten rhythmically in one part of the market where one saw men dancing frantically. These were the fathers of the *mbobi*. One of these men was a member of the *Idioy*, his headring hung on a string from his neck and he had white clay marks round his eyes to show that he had come from sacrificing at his ancestors' shrine. He wore a European sun helmet and in it were stuck the long white feathers of the fish-eagle (*Gypohierax angolensis*).

"The men beating the drums had round their wrists bracelet rattles of the seed pods of the *etinsah* tree. These rattles are called *nsa*.

"Then came a procession of *mbobi*, dancing and swaying to the rhythm of the drums beaten by the young girls who accompanied them. Walking with these *mbobi* were some old women, who had just come out of *enam* (a rejuvenation ceremony and process) and so their bodies were covered with red clay, with here and there a daub of yellow clay. These women who came out of *enam* must do so on the same day that the *mbobi* do, and in the same place. The brides' mothers carried fowls which would be hung round the brides' necks when the display was over, and the bride is escorted to her husband's abode.

"In the Ikot Ekpene area she walks, but in others, e.g. in Ukpum Unwana, in Mbiabon she is carried on a man's shoulders."

The inauguration of these marriage ceremonies lies in the hands of the Nyama society who, having seen the *mbobi* into their inclosures, must now divest themselves of their *nyama* insignia. This divestiture is effected as follows: The raffia necklet is not taken off. It is cut through by being hammered between the sharp edges of the two quartz pebbles. This necklet, with the rest of the red raffia in the box is then buried in a hole dug before the *isu Abasi uso* of the owner. Before covering them up with earth raffia palm wine is poured into the little earthenware pot and poured over the items in the hole. Two libations are poured into the hole. Then the stones, headlet and doll are placed in

the box and put away till the next season. These old customs are rapidly breaking up under the impact of missionary instruction as the following complaint which some members of the Nyama society brought before me shows. I quote from my official record of it.

Imuk, the Warrant Chief of Ikot Inyan Iduo, complained that recently, the woman, Eno Idem, the head of the local *Uso* came to him asking why he had stopped girls from becoming *mbobi*. He denied that he had ever done any such thing. He then called a town meeting to ask why girls were not following their old custom. At this meeting, Udofia Adiaha Udo said his daughter was not yet sufficiently mature and would be ready next year. Imuk then asked Abasi Ubon about his daughter. He replied that he was putting her into the "fattening house" at Christmas. Imuk remonstrated, and asked him who had made this new rule about the time for the fattening. Christmas was not the right time.

Abasi replied that no one had promulgated such a rule and that it was just his own choice. Imuk told him that neither his great grandmother, his grandmother, nor his mother had varied their custom and why should he change it. Imuk then continued:

"*Anantia* is the time of *mbobi*, no other. All the women of our town have been fattened at *Anantia*. This custom was given us to keep by our ancestors and these ancestors are not here to change it. They are dead. I told Udofia that these girls were to be fattened at the next *Anantia* as it was too late for this year and not at Christmas, otherwise there would be trouble in the town. I would get into trouble and so would others. I pointed out that the Government did not upset our customs, it is the school boys who do. But this custom of fattening our girls at *Anantia* we will not allow to be upset. I told Udofia he was to obey the town custom and I was not going to allow this change. He then quarrelled with me. I left and summoned him in the Native Court and he was fined."

Ano Idem, a female stated: "I am of this town and have been asked to speak on behalf of Ndi, the woman who is head of our *Uso*. We are the society that attends to the fattening of brides.



Fig. 1. Ibibio brides after being fattened.

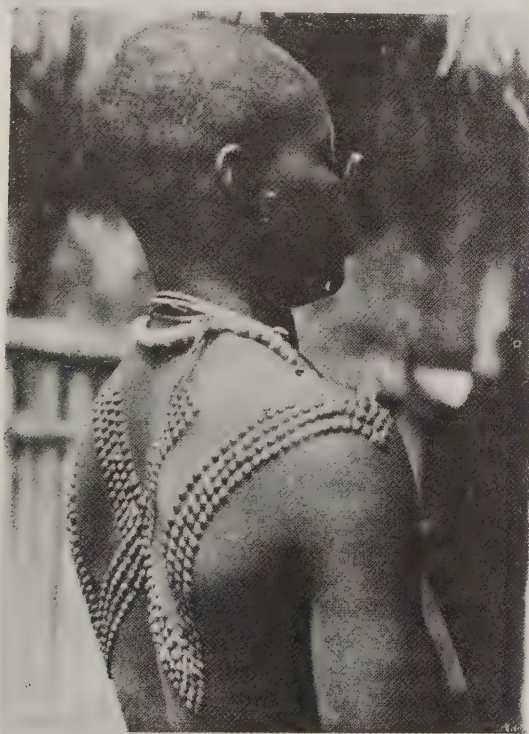


Fig. 1a. A Mbembe woman with cicatrization.

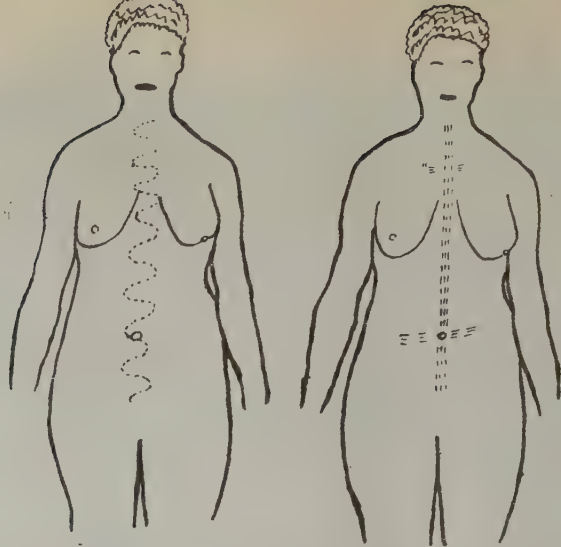


Fig. II. The Mbobi or body cicatrization incised prior to marriage.

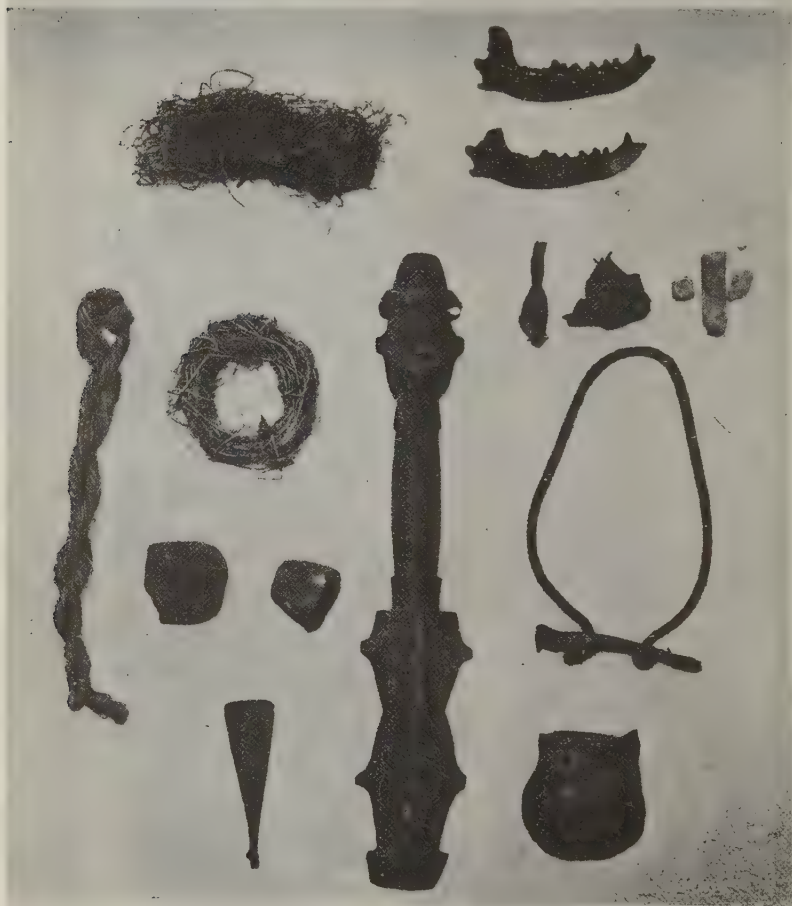


Fig. III. The insignia of a member of the Nyama Society.



Fig. IV. The box in which the Nyama Society insignia was kept.



Fig. V. The Nyehe ibok or raffia sporran worn just after marriage.



Fig. VI. Members of the Nyama society outside the District Office, Ikot Ekpene, Calabar Province, Southern Nigeria, 1922.



Fig. VII. Ibibio brides being carried away on their husbands' shoulders.

We put them into the 'fattening house' after we return from *Urua Ndam*. That is the time when we are called to attend to this custom. This year, after returning from *Urua Ndam*, we waited to be called, but no one called us to attend to their daughters. So we went to Chief Imuk to ask him if he had made the new rule that brides were to be fattened at Christmas. We asked him if he had done so and thus had broken one of our women's customs, for we had never broken any of the men's. He said he had made no such change. We insisted that the old time for fattening of the *mbobi* should be adhered to and not altered."

Etuk Umō Etuin, a woman, stated: "I am the head of the *Uso* for Edienne, just as Ndi is the head of the *Uso* in this town of Ikot Inyan Idue. We do not agree that *Akabare Isua* (the turn of the year, i.e. Christmas time) should be the season for fattening the *mbobi*. All persons are born of women, even men, why then should they interfere. Thirteen prospective *mbobi* have refused to enter the 'fattening' house now but are doing so at *Akabare Isua*. Nevertheless several school girls have this year entered the 'fattening' house and have already made their débüt."

Abasi Uboj, male, states: "I was called one day by Chief Imuk to his house. I went. There were a large number of people there but not the *Uso*. We were asked at what time we and others wanted to put our daughters into the 'fattening' house. Imuk said he understood that thirteen girls were going in at Christmas. I said that both my daughters and my son-in-law were Christians. I said that they were to go in at Christmas. He asked me who had invented this new rule because no others had done so at Christmas. He then went and summoned me and the Court fined me for spoiling the peace of the town."

Myself. "Who changed the *mbobi* season from *Anantia* to *Akabare Isua*?"

Abasi Uboj. "The Church. Yes, it was the Church who altered the season."

Myself. "Have you any objection of fattening your daughter?"

Abasi Uboj "No, none at all, only I want it done at *Akabare Isua* and not at *Anantia*."

Akpan Udo nwan Ikwot. "I only object to the time, not to the fattening of my sister-in-law."

Adiaha Abasi Uboj aged about sixteen, the eldest daughter in question of Abasi Uboj, and *Essien Ekpan*, another village girl of about fifteen: "We both attend the local mission school. We have no objection to being fattened, we merely object to the time at which it is to take place. We want it at Christmas."

However, objections were raised by other girls.

Fig. VI is a photograph of a group of Nyama women taken outside the Magistrate's Court in 1922. They had turned up in force to support one of their members who had been summoned for an assault on a Christian girl. The defendant is the second from the left, front row. She holds the summons in her right hand and her *eyensek* in her left. She has the dog's jaw-bone above her right ear. The woman on her right has the marks of four hands on her body.

What happened was this. A young girl attending the Scottish mission school at Ibiaku had reached the time when she was due to be married. As she had repudiated her pagan customs for Christianity she resisted the attentions of the Nyama society who however had the support of the girl's mother. The girl was overpowered and the operation performed. Judged by any role this act was an unprovoked assault. As the case was set down for me to take as a magistrate and not for the Native Court where it would have been dismissed, it was, by British law, a serious assault. Now these Nyama women were intent on maintaining the integrity of the social structure and assault *qua* assault was not part of their program. They were really law-abiding citizens insisting that their tribal customs be carried out.

Section 77 of the Supreme Courts Ordinance *Laws of Nigeria, Lagos 1923*, Vol. I. p. 42. reads as follows: "In Criminal Cases the Court may promote reconciliation and encourage and facilitate the settlement in an amicable way, of proceedings for common assault . . . and may thereupon order the proceedings to be stayed." So before opening court I called the girl into my office to see if I could not effect a reconciliation and thus not try the case. I asked her whether her own mother and

grandmother had in their day undergone this operation. She replied that they had. I then suggested that what was good enough for her ancestors was good enough for her. To this suggestion she agreed and said that her real grievance was that she had not been asked to submit to the operation. I then suggested that the matter could be settled out of court. She agreed to drop the prosecution if the cost of the summons, five shillings, were refunded to her. The assembled Nyama women agreed to do so and there the matter ended.

One wonders whether the objections of the missions would be so vehement if they knew that this very practice of clitoridectomy had been introduced into Europe and Britain on behalf of the Christian moral code. Thus Spitz (1952, XXI, 490) writes: "Around 1858 Dr. Isaac Baker Brown, a prominent London Surgeon who later became the much respected President of the Medical Society of London, introduced the operation of clitoridectomy. The indication for this operation was that in his opinion masturbation . . . leads to hysteria, epilepsy and convulsive diseases. He sought to cure masturbation by removal of the organ on which it is performed. He performed this operation in a very large number of cases, children and adults, establishing a special home for women, *The London Surgical Home*. Of these operations he published forty eight in 1866. It was this publication which got him into trouble with the Obstetrical Society, of which he was a Fellow. He was expelled from the society in 1867 after numerous stormy debates, and it is to be assumed that after 1867 clitoridectomy was discarded by the medical profession in England." (8)

There is an early description of this mutilation in 1670 by Ogilby, among the Quoaia around Cape Mount on the Gold Coast. In this description is a colloquial term for the *clitoris* not found in either the *Oxford English Dictionary* or in Partridge's *Slang Dictionary*. "They bring ten, twelve or more maids of full age, as also women, into a peculiar place in the wood not far from the town: where first huts are made for them, then a woman comes out of Gaula, whom they call *Soghwilly*, to be the chiefest in this work of the *Garnoer*, or *Vala*

Sandyla, as they call it. This *Soghwilly*, or priestess, gives the assembly hens to eat, with the obligation to stay with her in that place, which she names *Sandy-Latel*, that is *Hens of the Agreement*. After that she shaves off their hair and the next day brings them to a brook in the wood, where the aforesaid *Soghwilly*, by incision cuts out the mother, not without great pain and terror; then washing and healing the wound with green herbs, which sometimes requires ten or twelve days." (9)

In 1930 I was asked by the Nigerian Government to report on the clitoridectomy of the local Ibibio women, and I wrote as follows: "Missionaries take great exception to these practices. There is, however, one outstanding missionary, who having lived among the Ibibio, knows them as none other ever has, yet she did not condemn the practice of fattening brides. Mary Slessor was not opposed to this custom and said so. It is noticed that the medical report condemns the practice but it must be remembered that the Ibibio people are a long established and flourishing people. It follows that this custom, so far from proving inimical to the community, has resulted in one that thrives and increases. Ikot Ekpene is the most densely populated area in Nigeria and there the fattening custom flourishes . . . one cannot fatten a sick animal. A girl who does not fatten is very often rejected by her bridegroom who reclaims his dowry and seeks a girl who will fatten.

"The ability to fatten and to survive its effects, is a proof of fundamental good health and as a young man spends in dowry (*lobolo*) the equivalent of a small fortune he wants to be assured that he has not bought 'a pig in a poke'. It is probable that the bride parades naked, in order that a man may not be saddled with a wife who suffers from some deformity or abnormality.

"In a society where one cannot obtain a medical opinion the practice of fattening the bride and of her parading naked in the market are safeguards that have proved efficient." (10)

In 1933 I was again called on for a comment on this practice and wrote: "It is not clear how this annual affair 'has now degenerated into a barbarous and hurtful custom'. Here is the public registration of the marriage. Everyone knows who is being

married and to whom, a state of affairs not achieved under the Christian regime. Sickly girls do not fatten so that the custom ensures that only healthy brides are wedded. The naked parade, in view of the present nudist cult in England and Europe, can hardly be described as barbarous and hurtful and it ensures that no girls suffering from any deformity are married." (11)

The missions have roundly condemned this fattening as gross sensuality. The missions' misunderstanding over virginity and nudeness, and the consequent insistence on the wearing of clothes have caused the Nyama society to become defunct. A tragedy is that clothes, not needed in any case in the tropics, like the twilight which makes all cats grey, make all women alike and the lament of the elderly Ibibio women is that to-day there is no telling whether one is talking to a respectable married woman or to an *uwok*, the dress levels all. An *uwok*, as already mentioned, is a woman who has no body cicatrization: she has not been through the fattening process: she has not made her debut as a naked bride and been handed over publicly as a wife to be carried off on her husband's shoulders (Fig. VII). She has not been through the marriage ceremony. She has committed unpardonable sin. She has had an infant before her age-group has gone through the fattening process and its subsequent marriage ceremonies.

The body cicatrization is a permanent and ever present sign of, according to Ibibio ideals, a pure and chaste girlhood. That girls before marriage do have sexual intercourse is not the unforgivable sin, but what does place the maiden beyond the pale of virtue, is to be a mother before proceeding through the fattening process and its rituals.

Ibibio morals are not Christian morals but they do have their own code, and a very strict one it is.

Had the missions grasped the Ibibio point of view and in the matter of dress increased the "fore and oft" coverings to the dimensions of a knee skirt or kilt, leaving the rest of the body bare, no great break with native custom would have occurred and its usefulness incorporated into the body of customs acceptable to Christian converts. More important still, had the missions seized upon the enduring hall-mark of Ibibio maidenly chastity, the body cicatrization, they could have decreed that only Christian girls who were *virgines intactae* might proceed with the custom or, if that were repugnant, that the sign of the cross might be the design for the cicatrization thus marking the difference between a Christian virgin and her Ibibio pagan counterpart, an *mbobi*.

A panel of local Christian Ibibio matrons, on the analogy of a jury of matrons under the Common Law, could have been appointed to take, in the Christian community, the place of the *Nyama* in the pagan. This panel of Christian matrons could have reported when the time came whether the girl were a virgin or not. The *Nyama* would soon have followed suit and insisted that the pagan maidens before entering on the fattening process should also be virgins. It would have been so easy, with the willing co-operation of native public opinion, to have insisted on a tribal standard of chastity that is expected of Christian youth.

Had there been any vision in the mission field what a stand for a higher moral code could have been made and how much greater also would have been the control on native sexual mores.

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DIE VROEGSTE VERSLAE AANGAANDE HOTTENTOTS

G. S. NIENABER *

SYNOPSIS

This article enquires into attempts before 1652 at learning the language of the Hottentots. The information is drawn from Journals by early travellers, who occasionally gave one or more aboriginal words or personal names. Sir Thomas Herbert figures quite prominently in this survey; he compiled a short list of common words, including numerals up to ten.

The writer of this contribution attempts to prove that the Hottentot words for bread, and for cattle intended for sale to ships, were loan words derived from Dutch and/or English, and in this connection he examines an interesting aspect of the phonological system of the Hottentot consonants.

Die ou reisigers het in Hottentots 'n probleem gevind wat hulle oor was. Waar hulle ook al in hierdie romantiese jare gekom het toe hulle ongekaarte seë bevaar en ongehoorde tale verneem het, kon hulle as uitlanders darem na 'n tydjie 'n paar van die inlanders se woorde brabbel om met so 'n noodtaaltjie wense en behoeftes kenbaar te maak. Alleen met Hottentots het dit nie maklik gegaan nie. So sê Lancaster dat hulle na sewe weke se omgang in Tafelbaai nie 'n enkele woord van die Hottentotse taal aangeleer het nie (1601).

Die hoofredes het gelê in die ongewone fonologiese konsonantesisteem van Hottentots. Daar was vercers die vreemde en moeilike tongslae (klik- of klapklanke, Schnalze) waarmee (volgens Tindall) drie-kwart van hulle woorde begin het, en in die tweede plaas was daar die verbasende rykdom en frekwensie op die gebied van foukale medeklinkers. Met betrekking tot laasgenoemde 'n reksommetjie :

As ons die kolomme in Kroenlein tel, dan begin woorde op oor die 50 persent daarvan op 'n gutturale of velare konsonant, en met Kritzinger, Steyn e.a. tot grondslag (6de druk van hulle woordeboek) het Engels hierteenoor slegs 15 persent, Afrikaans 17 persent. Neem ons egter die gutturale Schnalze mede in aanmerking, staan

die persentasie vir Hottentots oor die 60 persent. 'n Mens merk hier duidelik dat die swaartekrag in die artikulasie van Hottentots verskuif het na die keelgebied, terwyl dit in die Europese tale meer na vore in die mond lê.

Daarom dat byna al die reisigers wat hulle indrukke weergee, berig dat Hottentots vir hulle klink asof hulle luister na 'n klomp kwaai kalkoennannetjies. Ander uitsprake is die volgende : as die Hottentotte gesels, is dit of hulle hik en sug (Beaulieu, 1620 – die datum verwys na die tyd van aanraking), klok en fluit (Van der Does, 1595), die kropsiekte het (C. de Houtman, 1595), gorrelgeluide maak (Wurffbain, 1646), klap met duim en vingers (Matelief, 1608), klik en smak met die tong (Tavernier, 1649), ens. Hulle taal word vergelyk met die die gesnater van kalkoene (Turck, 1595), die gekloek van broeis henne (Davis, 1595), met ganse (Kaerel (1595), voëls (Ten Rhyne, 1686), ape en bobbejane (Sir Thomas Herbert, 1626) ensovoorts. Party reisigers praat van 'n Babelse spraakverwarring of sê Hottentots is net geraas of klink soos die kastanjette van 'n Franse dansmeester. Almal meen die taal is wondervreemd, die meeste ag dit onartikuleerbaar, onleerbaar, onverstaanbaar, en dan gebruik hulle verder weinig vleiene of selfs simpatieke waarde-terme.

Teenoor al die bewyse van onwil staan darem 'n klompie pogings wat nie net óór die inlandse

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taal iets wil meedeel nie, maar ook uit die taal self. Dit is egter deurgaans oppervlakkig en behalwe in twee instansies net terloops. Tog is dit al 'n aanlopie en plaas die belangstelling op 'n hoër plan as die gewone haastige karakteristiek.

1. W. Lodewyckz (1595)

Die oudste gedokumenteerde Hottentotse woord staan in verband met die handel. In sy verslag van die eerste skipvaart van die Nederlanders na die Ooste vertel Willem Lodewyckz dat hulle op 5 Augustus 1595 anker gewerp het in Mosselbaai (Aquada de Sambras), en die volgende dag is drie sloepe uitgestuur om mense aan land te sit met die oog op 'n poging om met die inlanders in voeling te kom. Een groepie mans het inderdaad 'n paar inboorlinge teengekom en toe „gaven wij haer te verstaen . . . dat zy ons Vee souden brenghen, wy souden haer Yser (dwelck zy *Cori* noemen) geven” (p. 7).

Hondius het die woord van Lodewyckz oorge- neem en Dapper van Hondius; verder tref ons dit aan by Kolbe as *koukuri* (1727, I 431), by Valentyn as *koekuri* (1726, Vb 108) en by Thunberg as *KoRU* (II 8). By Kroenlein verskyn yster in Nama as $\pm nu-|uri(b)$, d.i. as „swart metaal,” met $|uri(b)$ as 'n versamelnaam vir metaal, miskien dieselfde woord as die voornoemde *Cori*. Miskien is *kou* by Kolbe en *koe* by Valentyn 'n poging om die $\pm nu$ weer te gee.

Het die Hottentot Coree sy naam te danke aan 'n omstandigheid wat met yster in verband gebring is?

2. J. Lancaster (1601)

Lancaster wat vertel dat sy mense in sewe weke geen enkele Hottentotse woord kon optel nie, het die taalmoeilikhed op 'n karakteristieke manier te bowe gekom. Die verhaal oor hom lui:

... hee met with certaine of the countrey people, and gave them diuers trifles, as knives and peeces of old iron and such like, and made signs to them to bring him downe sheepe and oxen. For he spake to them in the cattels language, which was never changed at the confusion of Babel, which was “moath” for oxen and

kine, and “baa” for sheepe, which language the people vnderstood very well without any interpreter . . . (p. 62-53).

Die grappige voorstelling moet nie as heeltemal waardeloos weggewuif word nie. Sulke klankna- bootsende woorde kan in 'n geleentheidstaal soms wel 'n staanplekkie verower – dit hang van die omstandighede af.

Lancaster het twee woorde genoem: *moath*, en *baa*. Sewe jaar na hom was 'n Hollandse vloot onder Matelief aan die Kaap (1603), en volgens Hondius (ek kon Matelief se reisverhaal nie in hande kry nie) haal hy die volgende Hottentotse woorde aan: „*Kahow, Kahow*: zit neder, *Bou* een Os, *Ba* een Sghaap” (*Klare Besgryving*, p. 29). Minstens een (nl. *ba*) en moontlik twee (ook: *bou*, met wisseling van bilabiale konsonant, of juist, met verlies van nasaliteit) van Lancaster se woorde het toe nog 'n bestanddeel van die handels-„taal” gevorm. Dit is veelseggend.

Opvallend genoeg, sewe jaar na Matelief het 'n Engelsman ons weer iets interessants oor die woorde meegedeel. Dit blyk nou (1615) dat daar 'n betekenisvolle verskuiwing plaasgevind het deurdat hierdie woorde as egte Hottentotse woorde bestempel word („which they call”). Terry sê:

... there (t. w. rondom Tafelberg) are good store of cattle, as little beeves, called by the barbarous inhabitants, Boos; and sheep, which they call Baas (pp. 13-14).

Dit is leersaam om na te gaan hoedat met die vermeerdering van kennis die noodwoord *ba* verdwyn, maar hoedat 'n eie sfeer ontwikkel word deur *bou*, *boo*, wat ongetwyfeld dieselfde woord is as die latere *boeba* (Ten Rhyne), *bubaa* (Kolbe) of *buba-a* (Valentyn), nou met 'n aangehegte inheemse geslagsuitgang, waardeur sy graad van inburgering aangetoon word. By Ten Rhyne (stuk gedruk 1686) is *boeba* nog os of koei, soos vroeër bv. by Lancaster; daarnaas noem Ten Rhyne *debitja* vir bulle. Ook by Wreede is 'n bul *dwiessa*, 'n woord wat in baie spellingvariante voorkom. Die medikus Schreyer wat omtrent ag jaar aan die Kaap vertoef het (1669-1677) en die Hottentotte noukeurig waargeneem en grondig beskryf het, vermeld die volgende: „die schönsten

und fettesten Ochsen, bey ihnen *Tibbesas* genennet" (*Reise*, 1931, p. 23). Die onderskeiding val op die kondisie. Wat vir die handel met die blankes bestem is, is die *boebas*, die swakstes van die trop! Die betekenisveld van die woord openbaar iets van die Hottentot se algemeen-menslike handelsvernuf en maak vir ons duidelik hoekom die vryburgers en ander hierteen per plakkaat gewaarsku is! (vgl. *Kaapse plakkaatboek*, I, 39, 70).

3. P. Floris (1611)

'n Vroeë datering van die Hottentotse woord *kanna* (wortel) kry ons by Pieter Floris. Hy het spesiaal opdrag ontvang om 'n lading van die plant in die Kaap te gaan haal, omdat daar gemeen is dat dit dieselfde plant was as die Japanse *nanjin* of *ningin* of die Chinese *ginseng*, „a medicinal root highly esteemed in the East as a restorative, and possessing in consequence a considerable commercial value . . . The true sort comes from Corea, and is worth its weight in silver" (HS, 1899, deel 1, p. l. vn en 2).

Floris vind in Mei 1611 nog twee Hollandse skepe in Tafelbaai "expressly come thether for the same purpose, being one of Japan that fyrste discovered the secret" (ald. p. 2). Floris het die plant gekry, maar omdat dit die verkeerde seisoen daarvoor was, was die wortel uitgedroog en sonder waarde. „He adds that the native name is *Canna*" (p. 2).

Cocks, Peynton (1615) en Ovington (1693) was 'n paar onder vele wat na die wortel kom soek het. Die inheemse naam was ongetwyfeld lank voor die koms van Van Riebeeck onder blankes bekend gewees, aangesien dit so gesog was deur Hollanders en Engelse.

4. J. Olafsson (1623)

In die Engelse vertaling van die outobiografie van hierdie Yslander is opgeteken: „They (die Hottentotte) call iron and copper *bras* and our bread they call *vdrucka*" (HS, 1931, nr 68, p. 73).

Oor hierdie twee woorde wil ek die een 'en ander sê. Dr. Blöndal wat die oorspronklike Yslander teks versorg het, meen dat ons hier waarskynlik die Engelse woord *brass* het. Dit is

boonop die enigste keer dat die woord ooit in Hottentots aangeteken is; die jaar na Ólafsson noem Herbert 'n ander woord wat in voorkoms en suffiks na die egte ou inheemse benaming lyk: *haddechereep*.

Die *NED* meld dat *brass* as grondwoord nie in ander tale voorkom nie. In Nederlands is daar 'n *braspenning* wat van vroeg af voorkom en as pasmunt van die begin af aan in die Kaap in omloop was en in die plakkate genoem word (vgl. *Kaapse plakkaatboek*, I, 49). Maar dit was uitsluitlik van silwer en die *WNT* toon aan dat dit heeltemal los staan van Engels *brass* en inderdaad niks met koper te doen het nie. Dit skyn dat ons hier in Hottentots stellig 'n leenwoord uit Engels het. Vir die volgende argument is dit van groot belang dat daar teen die tyd woorde uit die tale van die besoekende skepelinge oorgeneem word.

By *vdrucka* wil ek langer stilstaan. My gedagtegang hier is dat *vdrucka* óók 'n leenwoord uit Hollands of Engels is, daarin deur die feit gesteun dat die Hottentotse taaleie nie van woorde hou wat op *v* of *b* (*p*) begin nie, verder gaan ek betoog dat *vdrucka* en *brokwa* dieselfde woord is en dat die *bro-* van *brokwa* identies is met die woord vir die vreemde begrip brood soos dit later opduik.

Sir Thomas Herbert was in 1626 aan die Kaap, drie jaar na Ólafsson, en hy gee *bara* aan as die Hottentotse woord vir brood. As ons die *-cka* met die meervoudsuitgang *-qua* (*-kwa*) identifiseer, dan is die verskil tussen *váru-* van Ólafsson en *bara* van Herbert so klein dat ons hier by die gelykheid van betekenis en klank dieselfde woord in die twee vorme kan vermoed.

Naas *váru* (*cka*) en *bara* kry ons nog die volgende spelvorme van die woord vir brood: *biri* by Witsen (1691); Valentyn (1726) gee *bree*; Thunberg (1773, vgl. *Resan*, II, 85) *BRè*; Tindall (1857) *beri*(*p*); Kroenlein (1886) *berè*(*b*), met die eerste *e* „(ein) ganz kurzer Vokal," amper onhoorbaar; die twee laasgenoemdes vir Nama, en vir Korana *brē*(*b*) by Wuras. Die slot *p* of *b* is net die manlike suffiks, sodat ons by almal 'n betreklike konstante vorm het, bv. 'n *bree* met 'n onvaste eerste lettergreep daarin, gedra deur 'n dowwe vokaal (*be-* *bi-* en *ba-*) wat dikwels gesinkopeer is; wa

Ólafsson met sy aksent op die *a* bedoel het, is nie baie duidelik nie.

Daar hier telkens van dieselfde woord sprake is, sal seker nie betwis word nie.

Daar is nog 'n ander woord. Valentyn noem vir brood in Hottentots naas die gemelde *bree* ook nog *brokwa* (ald. 108). As ons Kolbe se onwaarskynlike storiëtte aangaande die onbedagsame dominee van Amersfoort buite rekening laat (vgl. Kolbe, I, 416-417), dan het ons 'n aantal uitsprake oor die gebruik van *brokwa* wat in hoofsaak ooreenstem maar in allerlei besonderhede van mekaar afwyk. Ek noem eers kortliks 'n paar verteenwoordigende gevalle.

Hondius (1652) vermeld meestal sy segsman, maar nie by hierdie sin wat hy aanhaal nie: „Singende ook al danssende/ *Hottentot Brokwa*, *Hottentot*, *Brok-wa*, &c. Waar mede sy willen seggen Geeft *Hottentot* een brok broot.” Dapper (1668) neem dit net so oor. Heeck (1655) sê: „(sy) singen voor wat broodt *Hottentot*: ende *Hottentot Brokqua*,” Saar (1660): „(sie) schreyen *Brocqua*, das ist *Brod*,” Frikius (1680): hulle „roepen *Brokwa*, welck brood beteeckend . . .”; Hesse (1680): „*Hottentot Brokwa* . . . geef den *Hottentot* een *Brock Brood*,” en Tappens (1704): „als ze wat tabak gekregen hebben . . . zingen zy *Hottentot Brukwa*”.

Almal sê dus as die Hottentotte die formule met *brokwa* in die mond neem, dan (i) sing en dans, roep of skree hulle, d.i. hulle betuig vreugde; (ii) vra of bedel hulle iets (vreugde in afwagting) of bedank vir 'n geskenk.

Maar daar is verskil van mening oor wat hulle wil hê, anders gestel, wat hulle met *brokwa* bedoel. Dit lyk of die woord vir party soos vir die twee kompilers Hondius en Dapper aan 'n „brok” brood laat dink, d.w.s. hulle vereenselwig die stam met 'n gelykluidende Nederlandse woord. Let op die lettergreepverdeling by Hondius. Hesse se duiding is vaag, en dit lyk (uit die aanhaling by Hesseling - ek kon die oorspronklike nie raadpleeg nie) of Tappens dit op tabak betrek, in elk geval op 'n geskenk.

Onder die mense wat hulle kennis eerstehands opgedoen het en dus op grond van persoonlike navraag kan praat, is daar Saar en Frikius wat

uitdruklik meedeel dat *brokwa* 'n woord vir brood is en Heeck skyn dit te suggereer. Daar is in elk geval goeie gronde om aan te neem dat *brokwa* nie 'n brok is nie maar die Hottentotse naam vir brood.

Dit lyk my, samevattend, of *brokwa*, gelees as *bro-kwa*, by Tappens *bru-kwa*, dieselfde woord moet wees as Ólafsson se *várucqa* (sê: *váru-cqa*) wat hy uitdruklik aangee as die Hottentotse term vir brood. Betekenis en die vorm laat die gevolgtrekking toe; die dubbele ooreenkoms is darem te opmerklik om net op toeval te berus!

En nogeens: is *bro-*, *bru-* en *varu-* en *bara* nie variante by *bree*, *brie* nie? Die betekenis en die vorm is weereens opmerklik genoeg om die gevolgtrekking te regverdig.

'n Ander opmerklike faktor kan nou in verband hiermee te pas gebring word. Dit is die Hottentotse fonologiese sisteem. Kroenlein het geen woorde wat op *v* of *p* begin nie: hy vat hulle saam onder *b*, en selfs so gesien is daar in die hele Nama slegs dertien woorde, suffikse nie meegereken nie, wat op hierdie voorkonsonante begin, nl. ses werkwoorde, vier selfstandige naamwoorde en drie ander. 'n Woordbegin op *b* (*p*) of *v* in Hottentots is 'n hoogste uitsondering. Die Hottentotse konsonantsisteem wys dit af; dit druis teen sy normale stelsel in.

Dit laat die vermoede posvat dat *bree-* of *bro-* en *váru-* van buite af ingevoer is, van vreemde oorsprong is, m.a.w. dat dit die Hollandse of Engelse *brood/bread* is, in aangepaste Hottentotse gedaante en met inheemse uitgange.

Hottentots ken verder geen slot-*t* in sy woordstelsel nie, altans, dit bestaan nie in die hele Nama nie. 'n Woord wat op -*t* (-*d*) uitgaan, soos *brood* by ons, sal, as dit in Hottentots opgeneem word as 'n bestanddeel van hulle taal, wel nog die uitsonderlike *br-* (*be-r*, *bi-r*, *ba-r* ens.) kan absorbeer, na die lyk, maar sal die eindklank noodwendig moet oplos omdat dit iets is wat totaal onbestaanbaar met hulle taalgewoonte is.

Net soos *ba* (vir skaap) en *bou*, *bubaa* (vir ruilbeeste), almal met die ongewone *b-* Anlant, vroeër oorgeneem is, en net soos die geïsoleerde *bras* vir koper en yster uit Engels geleen is nog voor die koms van Ólafsson, is ook *váru-cqa*, en

later *bru-kwa* of *bro-kwa*, en met ander suffiksale groepering, *bara, bree, brie* m.i. 'n leenwoord in Hottentots uit die taal van die blanke brood-besitters.

Verder moet onthou word dat die begrip brood aan die Hottentotte totaal onbekend was voor hulle aanraking met die blankes. Hulle was daar aan die begin so versot op dat hulle allerlei toertjies uitgevoer het om die „toeriste” se hart sag te maak en hulle vrygewig te stem. Hulle kon dus nog geen eie naam vir brood gehad het nie en moes een geskep of geleen het. Ons word m.i. tot die gevolgtrekking gedwing dat die Hottentotte al vroeg die nemende party was, sowel wat die saak betref as die naam daarvoor.

Sir Thomas Herbert (1626)

Sir Thomas Herbert neem chronologies 'n heel belangrike plek in. Hy was die eerste wat doelbewus 'n poging aangewend het om 'n klompie Hottentotse woorde in 'n lysie saam te bring. „Doelbewus” is hier, gelet op wat Lancaster ons in 1601 meegedeel het, die trefwoord as 'n mens in ag neem dat sy ekspedisie net 19 dae in die Tafelvallei vertoef het nadat die ses „great well-man'd Ships” op 11 Julie 1626 die ankers uitgewerp het.

Sir Thomas het die inboorlinge beskryf en, wat vir ons hier ter sake is, die een en ander meegedeel aangaande hulle taal. Die betrokke paragrawe neem ek hier oor tesame met die lysie telwoorde en daarby nog 'n lysie van twintig woorde waarvan ek die helfte nie met Namaekwiwalente in verband kan bring nie. Handelsterme is, vreemd genoeg, swak verteenwoordig, erotiese aangeleenthede egter redelik.

Their words are founded rather like that of Apes, then men, whereby its very hard to sound their Dialect, the antiquitie of it whither from *Babell* or no. The qualitie, whither beneficiall or no, I argue not.

For the Readers content I haue noted some of their Language, which I haue writ so neere as I could pronounce it, their pronounciation is like the Irish: their customes not much vnlike the rude ones, of antique times. Their numbers

exceed not *Ten*, (like those, in some parts of *Madagascar*) such as follow.

Istwee, is one. *Istum*, two, *Istgwunny*, three, *Hackey*, foure. *Croe*, fve. *Istgunnee*, sixe. *Chowhawgh*, seuen. *Chishow*, eight. *Cusho*, nine. And *Gheshee*, is ten.

A knife, <i>Droaff</i> .	A Bracelet, <i>Whohoop</i> .
A Quill, <i>Guasaco</i> .	Egge-shells, <i>Sun</i> .
A Hat, <i>Twubba</i> .	Seales, <i>Harkash</i> .
A Nose, <i>Tweam</i> .	A Woman, <i>Traqueosh</i> .
A Sword <i>Dushingro</i> .	Bread, <i>Bara</i> . Giue me, <i>Quoy</i> .
A Brooke, <i>Bueem</i> .	The Genitor, <i>Gwammey</i> .
A Ship, <i>Chichunney</i> .	Mens stones, <i>Wchraef</i> .
Water, <i>Chtammey</i> .	The wombe, <i>Wchieep</i> .
Brasse, <i>Haddechereef</i> .	Paps, <i>Semigwe</i> .
A Skin, <i>Gwummey</i> .	Yard, <i>Istcoom</i> .

Na Herbert sal ons eers weer in die „Hollandse tyd” woordelyste kry, en tot dan nog 'n paar persoonsname van Hottentotte. Ons het nie eers 'n Hottentotse pleknaam voor 1652 gedokumenteer nie, wat wel opvallend is.

6. *Hottentotse persoonsname*

Die eerste Hottentot wat ons van naam ken, is Cori, by Terry ook Coeree, by Jourdain Corie, Corye, Cooree, by Theal Cory. Hy (en 'n maat wat uit verdriet op see oorlede is) is in 1613 per Hector na Engeland geneem en na ses maande is hy, oorval deur heimwee, terug gebring na sy mense in die buurt van Tafelbaai. Terry sê dat Cori, in Engeland die gas van Sir Thomas Smith, die voorsitter van die Engelse Oos-Indiese Kompanjie, „(would) cry very often thus in broken English, 'Coeree home go, Souldania go, home go,' (p. 20), waarskynlik die vroegste „voorbeeld” van gebroke taal in die mond van 'n Hottentot. („Souldania” vir Saldanha is 'n ou naam vir Tafelbaai).

Peter Mundy (1634) noem 'n ander geval.

There (op „Penguin Island,” 'n ou naam vir Robbeneiland) wee found Hadda, one of their Countrie people, whome Captain Pynne had carried with him into Bantam and brought

hither. Hee spake a little English and delivered upp letters that Captaine Pynn att his departure left with him. (John Pynn het in Maart 1629 na Bantam geseil, teruggekeer 1630). (p. 327). The said Hadda is Chiefe of all that dwell there (p. 328). 'n Ander naam leer ons ken by Wurff-bain (1646). Hy vertel ons van Isaac, die berekenende „posmeester” van die Hollanders wat briewe vir hulle in bewaring geneem het en geweet het hoe om daaruit sy slag te slaan. Dit is waarskynlik die vroegste geval van 'n heidense inboorling aan die Kaap wat met 'n Bybelse naam gepronk het, 'n naam wat die blankes hom moes gegee het.

Hier is die subtile invloed van die witmense merkbaar, soos ook in die geval van „King Herry” wat teen 1640 met die Engelse na die Ooste was, 'n Europese naam gekry en aangeneem het, en in Van Riebeeck se tyd 'n vername rol as tolk sal speel. Sulke feite laat sien hoe die vereuropeïsering van die inboorlinge aan die Kaap sy loop begin neem het. Leendert Janszen vermeld in sy *Journal* dat een van die Strandlopers al „goed duydes spraeck”, d.i. Nederlands (1 Junie 1647, weer op 14 Sept. 1647), en in die *Remonstrantie* deur hom en N. Proot beweer hulle: met goeie behandeling sal die Hottentotte nie te vrese wees nie: „maer metter tijt (sal hulle) de Nederlantse spraecke leeren”:

Dat de meergenoemde Inwoonders de Nederlantse spraecke wel sullen leeren, is apparent, want ten tijde de opperstuijrmán Jacob Claesz: Haek omtrent 6 a 8 weecken met siecken aldaer aen lant lagh, quamen dagelijcx hout halen om te koken, ende wisten te zeggen eerst hout-halen dan eeten ende die van 't schip Haerlem conden sij meest alle bij haer namen noemen, ende eenige woorden spreekken dat buijten twijffel onse spraecke sullen leeren.

Wel en in goede correspondentie met haer levende sal men metter tijt eenige van haer kinderen tot jongens ende dienaars gebrijcken ende in Christelijcke religie optrecken.

Hier was dus Hottentotte wat 'n Nederlandse sinnetjie kon sê en die skepelinge byna almal op hulle naam geken het! En een kon die taal van die blankes goed praat!

Die algemene strekking is presies dieselfde as wat ons in die ander afdelings opgemerk het.

Alles tesaam geneem, kan ons dus sê: teen 1652 is daar al gevorder wat betref die kennis van die inboorlinge en was daar dikwels 'n mate van aanraking groot genoeg om van 'n vriendskaplike verstand-houding te praat. Die tyd van vreemdigheid is agter die rug.

Hierdie toenadering, dit leer die geskiedenis ons, het eintlik die snelste van 1640 af plaasgevind en dáárvoor is veral die Nederlanders verantwoordelik. Die Engelse wat die Stormkaap dikwels aangedoen het, tot ongeveer 1630 omtrent net so ywerig as die Nederlanders, het daarna St. Helena bo Tafelbaai begin verkies en die Kaap byna heeltemal aan die Nederlanders oorgelaat.

Die inbesitname van hierdie Suidhoek is grootliks aangehelp deur die gunstige berigte oor die goeie gesindheid van die inwoners.

VERWYSINGS

- Afkortings: HS vir *Hakluyt Society* (teksreeks).
LV vir *Linschoten Vereeniging* (teksreeks).
NED vir *New (Oxford) English Dictionary*.
VRV vir *Van Riebeeck-Vereeniging* (teksreeks).
WNT vir *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*.

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FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND ETHNOLOGICAL SCIENCES

At the invitation of the American Anthropological Association and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, the 5th Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences will be held at Philadelphia, from September 1 to September 9, 1956. One paper will in principle be accepted from each participant, without prejudice to additional contributions requested for presentation at General Sessions. Abstracts should be in hand by March 1, 1956. No papers with a lengthier oral reading time than 20 minutes will be accepted for publication, and publication cannot be guaranteed. Rooms in University buildings will be available to members at \$2.50 per night. The registration fee is \$10.00; relatives of members may become Associate members, the fee being \$3.00.

Inquiries should be addressed to the Secretary, American Organizing Committee, International Congress of Anthropology, National Academy of Sciences—National Research Council, 2101 Constitution Avenue, Washington 25, D.C., U.S.A. Cable Address NARECO.

* * *

This will be the first time that the Congress has met in the western hemisphere. The American Anthropological Association has invited the active participation of the American leaders of anthropology and its sister sciences. The National Academy of Sciences, with its section of Anthropology, and the National Research Council, through its Division of Anthropology and Psychology, have accepted the responsibility for organizing the Congress and have delegated the task to the Committee on International Relations in Anthropology which since 1945 has fostered American participation in the Congress.

The Congress program, as planned by the Committee and approved by the Permanent Council at its 1954 meeting in Paris, will consist of meetings of sections, joint sessions, and general sessions, at which scientific papers will be presented and discussed; the presentation of films and recordings; excursions; free evenings for entertainment in Philadelphia homes; receptions; meetings of the Permanent Council and of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. The final structure of the program will take form only after papers have been received.

CORRESPONDENCE

A Note on Johannes Lochenberg

From MR. S. A. ROCHLIN,
Johannesburg.

I was interested in the reference to Johannes Lochenberg in Prof. Percival R. Kirby's study on "Gquma, Mdepa and the amaTshomane Clan: A By-way of Miscegenation in South Africa", *African Studies*, 13, 1, 1954, pp. 6, 10-11, 19. He was the son of Nicholas Lochenberg. I should like to add a note to what Prof. Kirby has written about Johannes Lochenberg. In the *Cape Monitor*, April 16, 1859, I discovered this allusion about him made by a King William's Town correspondent of the Cape Town Paper under date of April 6, 1859:

"A 'notable' arrived here under the 'Timerous' appellation of Hans Lochemberg,¹ his own statement is to receive medical aid. Report says he has come down to obtain permission from the Government to allow him to pitch into the *Pondomeesees*. Mr. Hans or Mynheer Hans, as some have it, gives himself out as a great man. You have only to look at the man and listen to him for five minutes, and you will be convinced. I have had the 'felicity' and I cannot refrain from penning the result. He speaks English fluently and very correctly. In appearance he is a stoutbuilt man, about 50 years of age, resembling a patriarchal 'Boer', but on close examination you find a peculiar flatness of the nostrils: and crisp hair too strongly testify to

the amalgamation of the European with aboriginal AmaKosa, and which I have learned is very general in the settlements on the Umzimvoobo. The refugees of the Dutch farmers at some early date married and settled amongst them, as well as some of the progeny of the unfortunate children saved and naturalized by the natives from the wreck of the *Grosvenor*. They dress very well and in European costumes, and have made great progress in the cultivation of many articles used by civilized people. In fact, one young lady, who accompanied 'Mynheer Hans', told me that they reared their own coffee, made their own sugar, had plenty of bananas, but regretted that pine apples did not thrive there. Yet if I should pay them a visit, I might rely on having a supply of all these delicacies. In addition to which Hans says - he has a brother, a missionary, a God-fearing man. As Mr. Hans stated this, and being most gloriously drunk, I asked him how it was his brother did not tell him not to get drunk. His answer was, he does his work, and I do mine, I like the brandy - and all missionaries and all the doctors, if they say Hans, you must not drink brandy, I won't believe them. I am a great man in my country, I have two hundred guns, and nine hundred shields; I am a Kafir and I will die a Kafir. Being assured of this truth what a blessing Mr. Hans would be if he would only take all the remnants of the dispersed and broken chiefs off to his far home."

¹ The Johannes Lochenberg of Prof. Kirby's essay -Rochlin.

Makhanya Kinship Rights and Obligations

From MISS LEAH LEVY,
School of African Studies,
University of Cape Town.

In his review in *African Studies*, Vol. 14, p. 96, of D. H. Reader's *Makhanya kinship rights and obligations*, Dr. Jeffreys states "At the bottom of p. 38 allusion is made to Fig. 4 which however is

missing." As the typist concerned in the production of this Communication from the School of African Studies, U.C.T., I must point out that Fig. 4 is not missing: it simply is the whole of p. 38. The lay-out of Fig. 4 is consistent with that of the other three figures in the article.

27/7/55

EARLY BAFOKENG SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

JAMES WALTON¹

SYNOPSIS

The material culture of the early Sotho-Tswana settlement in South Africa falls into a distinct three-fold pattern, one aspect of which is attributable to the Bafokeng. Excavation of early Bafokeng settlements in Basutoland has revealed a culture which is traceable also in the southern Transvaal, the north-eastern Free State and in Natal. This culture is marked by paved circular hut floors for wattle and thatch beehive huts, cave dwellings with huts built within the caves, linked stone kraals and pottery characterized by elaborate and distinctive rim decorations. The distribution of these features is closely in agreement with the area formerly occupied by the Bafokeng according to their own tribal traditions.

INTRODUCTION

The study of early Sotho-Tswana settlements in South Africa reveals a sub-stratum of two early cultural groups and a third, somewhat later, intrusive element. The isolation of these fundamental cultures and their association with particular tribes is by no means easy. Tribal dispersions, culture contacts, the ravages of war and tribal intermarriage have produced a relatively homogeneous culture from which it is often difficult to separate the constituents. Nevertheless a study of the early sites in the Orange Free State, Basutoland, the southern Transvaal and Bechuanaland has allowed an approximate definition of the material cultures of the first two tribes, the Leghoya and the Bafokeng.

BAFOKENG TRIBAL TRADITIONS

According to tribal traditions, as collected and interpreted by Ellenberger (1), the Bafokeng crossed the Zambesi during the twelfth century on their southward migration. After living with the Bahurutse in Bechuanaland they eventually separated and moved eastwards into the Transvaal where they split into two sections. The one re-

mained in the Magaliesberg district until it was almost destroyed by Moselekatse whilst the other divided into small clans which crossed the Vaal and ultimately attached themselves to later tribes.

As a result of this fission the Bafokeng lost their tribal power but they have continued, even up to the present day, to retain their individual seniority and influence. They were regarded as clever and able by the other tribes whose chiefs frequently chose Bafokeng wives. From these marriages new tribes originated and the Bafokeng culture spread. It is on account of this dispersion that one so often finds Bafokeng characteristics associated with other tribal cultures. Many early Sotho-Tswana sites in the Free State and the Transvaal have revealed this dual aspect, particularly noticeable in the pottery and hut types. The occurrence of ornamented-rim pottery with stamped wares and of corbelled stone huts with paved hut floors on the same site is due to these clans of Bafokeng who attached themselves to other tribes.

The Bafokeng also frequently married Bushman wives and lived with them in their cave dwellings. To render them more comfortable they built huts of rubble and mud within the caves. At a number of sites, notably Qoaling in Basutoland, caves with huts which were occupied by this Bush-Bafokeng population are found in the rock scarp. On the lower platforms are the villages of the Bafokeng but the middens of these settle-

¹ Mr. James Walton, F.S.A., is on the staff of the Education Department, Maseru, Basutoland.

ments contain stone implements as well as Bafokeng pottery, thus demonstrating the close association between the two groups. The light skins and short stature of the present-day Bafokeng afford further evidence of the intermarriage which took place between their forefathers and the original Bush inhabitants. The Bafokeng themselves openly state that they are the progeny of an early Bush-Bantu association. The same is true of the Leghoya and, in fact, of all the early Sotho-Tswana tribes.

When the Bafokeng separated from the Bahurutse they moved south-eastwards to the Magaliesberg and eventually across the Vaal into the present Free State. They were certainly established in the vicinity of the Magaliesberg before the beginning of the sixteenth century and one section had crossed the Vaal and settled on the slopes of Ntsuanatsatsi, between Frankfort and Vrede, before 1530. This clan, the Ba-'Mutla or *Bafokeng ba 'mutla o jeoa tala* (Bafokeng of the hare which is eaten raw) is of particular interest. The people of this clan, who derived their name from the fact that they bit the ears of the hare before it was cooked, were the first of the Sotho-Tswana to cross the Vaal and many married Bush wives. Eventually even the chief himself took the daughter of a Bushman chief as his wife. This caused no particular comment but when he died many of the Bafokeng and the Bakuena, who had joined them at Ntsuanatsatsi, refused to follow the son of a Bushwoman.

As a consequence the clan split and the main section, under the son of the Bush-Bafokeng marriage, crossed the Drakensberg eastwards and eventually reached the coast in the vicinity of Durban. Their passage southwards along the coast is marked by the rim-decorated pottery which Schofield has classified as Natal Coastal pottery, NC2, and which is very similar to early Bafokeng pottery found in the Orange Free State and Basutoland(2). The Mpondo and Thembu peoples with whom the Ba-'Mutla came in contact adopted the latter's pottery practices which they have retained up to the present time.

According to Ellenberger the Ba-'Mutla migration from Ntsuanatsatsi must have taken place about 1660 but Schofield, on different

evidence, suggests that they were established in Natal by the middle of the sixteenth century. Schofield is more probably correct for their traditions also state that they lived in the Transkei for some eight or nine generations which dates their arrival among the Thembu as about 1600. During the time they sojourned in the Transkei they adopted the language and customs of their hosts. They also accepted the Xhosa equivalent of their name and they are now known as the amaVundle. Ultimately in 1848 they settled in south Basutoland in the Mjanyane Valley where they live to-day.

Although their numbers were probably small their route southwards is clearly marked by finds of NC2 pottery in the vicinity of Durban, at Umgazana Cave on the Pondoland coast and at Cala and Qolora in the Transkei; by their influence on Mpondo and Thembu pottery traditions; and by the existing remnants of amaVundle in the Port Shepstone-Umzimkulu region. All these indicate a migration route (Fig. 1) which is closely in accord with their tribal traditions.

Of the other Bafokeng groups those who followed Mare settled between the Sand River and Winburg from where they eventually spread to Mekuatling, Futhane and so across the Caledon to Butha-Buthe southwards. Another clan under Mphofe settled on the slopes of Mabula about 1640. They were a branch of the Ba-'Mutla but later they were called *Maja-poli* (those who eat goat) on account of the fact that they were too poor to eat beef. One section of these poor Bafokeng crossed the Caledon at the end of the seventeenth century and settled at Menkhoaneng, the others remaining at Mabula under chief Peo from whom they took the name of Mapeo. Other clans settled at Butha-Buthe and further east between the Elands River and the Liebenberg Vlei Spruit.

In spite of this dispersion into scattered clans the influence of the Bafokeng on the tribes with whom they came into contact still remained. As members of the senior tribe they continued to be respected and their language and customs were adopted by their associates, particularly the Bakuena. Throughout the area which they occupied

we find early settlements showing a two-fold character in the pottery, huts and kraal plans, indicating that a Bafokeng group had attached itself to some other tribe. Outside their sphere of influence the settlements are more uniform in character and only one culture is present. Thus at Kalkoen near Frankfort and Krugerskraal near Heilbron the two cultures are found together whereas at Vegkop and Sand River the stone hut settlements are associated only with colour-banded stamped pottery.

MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE EARLY BAFOKENG

In Basutoland three sites, Qoaling, Metlaeeng and Ntlo-Kholo have been examined which are traditionally ascribed to the Bafokeng and these are characterized by the following features:

Cave Dwellings

The Bafokeng, frequently intermarrying with the Bushmen as they did, occupied the Bushman caves and rock shelters. Thus Komane, when he settled at Futhane, lived on friendly terms with the Bushmen in the cave Ngo-ngo-ngong and the first Bafokeng to settle at Ntlo-Kholo, in Basutoland, similarly occupied the large rock shelter at that place. At first they were content simply to wall-off the front of the cave and at Qoaling the cavities beneath a number of tumbled boulders were walled up in this manner to provide dwellings. Later the inside of the wall and the cave wall itself were smeared with mud. Small clay ledges were provided and at the rear of the cave a platform was built and smeared to afford a keeping place for pottery and other family treasures. In the larger caves and rock shelters internal rubble walls, smeared with mud, divided the dwelling space into a number of rooms or huts.

The finest examples of such cave dwellings are to be seen at Ntlo-Kholo, an extensive rock shelter carved out of the mountain of the same name, which adjoins Thaba Bosiu in Basutoland (3). This shelter was occupied by Bushmen when the first Bantu people, the Ma-Phetla or Ba-

Tsoeneng, arrived on the scene a little before 1700. The Ma-Phetla chief, Matelile, married a Bushwoman from the Ntlo-Kholo cave and, as she refused to vacate her accustomed dwelling, Matelile was compelled to join her and in this way the rock shelter derived its name of Ntlo-Kholo, the "great hut". When the Ma-Phetla left they were followed by the Ma-Polane and later still, in 1740, by a group of Baphuthi-Bafokeng. According to local tradition the Bafokeng were the first to build hut walls within the shelter.

These first huts were built by walling-off a portion of the shelter with a semi-circular wall of rubble smeared outside and inside with clay (Fig. 2). Tiny clay shelf projections were provided and at the back of the hut a storage platform was built up and smeared over. Windows were not considered necessary and the earliest doorway was a circular opening, 18 inches in diameter and 9 inches above the cave floor (Fig. 2.b). Small doorways of this type were necessary to keep out wild animals.

Later huts were added to the first in typical Bafokeng fashion. These were approximately circular and, whilst retaining most of the original features, they had low, narrow horseshoe-shaped doorways (Fig. 2.c), small circular window openings and clay seats. Still later sub-rectangular huts were added with clay "wall-cupboards" instead of ledges and rectangular doorways with undressed timber jambs. The walls of the earlier compartments went up to meet the cave roof but the later huts had roofs of thatch reaching from the top of the compartment walls to the rock above.

Similar smeared cave dwellings with mud ledges have been noted at Qoaling, near Maseru, where the cave floors are also smeared and a circular cobbled hearth was found near the entrance to one cave. At Dilli-dilli, in south Basutoland, is a cave with smeared wall and clay ledges and the lower paintings in the "Cave of the White Hippopotamus" at Knecht's Kloof, near Zastron, are similarly covered with clay. At Knecht's Kloof the interior walls, judging by the fragments which still remain, consisted of a core of reeds

smeared with clay on each side to a thickness of about 2 inches (4). A photograph, reproduced by Lagden, shows cave huts of this same type in use near Leribe (5). Some of these had unsmeared rubble walls although the chief hut was smeared. The roofs were of reeds stretching almost vertically upwards from the tops of the walls to the cave roof. Other recently occupied cave huts have been recorded from Sikubu Mission, near Butha-Buthe, and from Caledonpoort on the Basutoland border between Fouriesburg and Butha-Buthe. In Basutoland they are known throughout the entire area occupied by the Bafokeng. At Masoeeling, near Teyateyaneng, the Bafokeng still live in rock shelter dwellings and at this site huts, *khotla* and cattle kraals are all built in hollows beneath the overhanging rock.

Other cave structures have been described by Haughton and Wells from two sites in the Transvaal: at Kleinfontein in the Gatsrand Hills and at Lindequesdrift in the Vereeniging district (6). The cave enclosures at Kleinfontein were similar in construction to those at Ntlo-Kholo although smaller in size. The walls were of rubble smeared with clay and the cave wall was also faced with clay to the height of the walls. The floors were of clay, sometimes overlying a stone paving; a few specimens displayed a clay bench occupying the rear part of the enclosure and in some cases an external platform filled the angle between the two enclosures: all features found at Ntlo-Kholo.

At Lindequesdrift the enclosures were of an irregular form, approximating to a circle with a diameter of about 8 feet, one side being formed by the rock face which was smeared with clay like the rubble walls. Some of the structures had a clay floor continuous with the walls.

According to local tradition the Lindequesdrift cave was temporarily occupied by the Bafokeng in pre-Voortrekker times and the occupants were suffocated by fires lit at the entrance by the Matabele about 1820. Haughton and Wells suggest that the structures in this cave were grain stores but that the more elaborate structures at Kleinfontein may have been dwellings. These display no evidence of roofing although it is suggested that remains of upright poles, some-

times outside and sometimes inside the walls, may have supported a roof or awning of some kind.

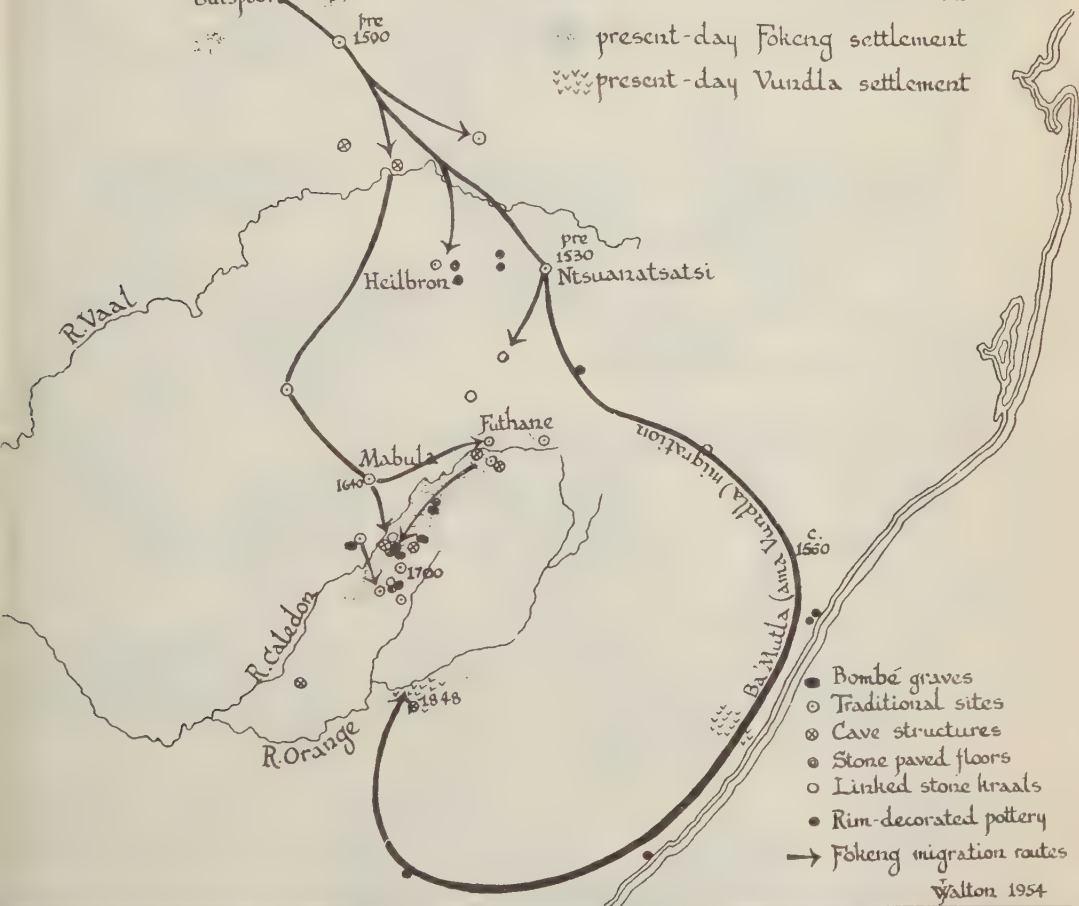
These cave dwellings, which are usually ascribed to the Bafokeng and are normally associated with other Bafokeng cultural features, are characterized by:

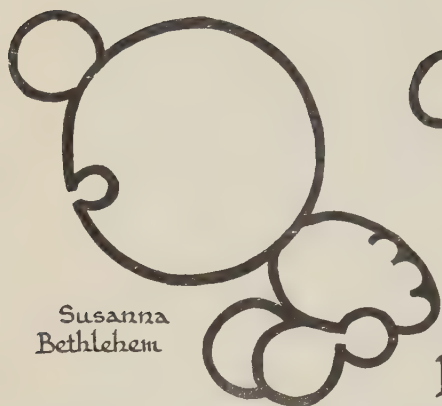
- (a) Rubble walls, smeared with mud, serving two or more huts.
- (b) Mud-smeared cave walls and floors.
- (c) Mud ledges, raised entrance- and storage platforms.
- (d) Circular doorways giving way to narrow horseshoe-shaped doorways and eventually rectangular doorways.
- (e) Small circular window openings, if any at all.

Stone-walled Kraals

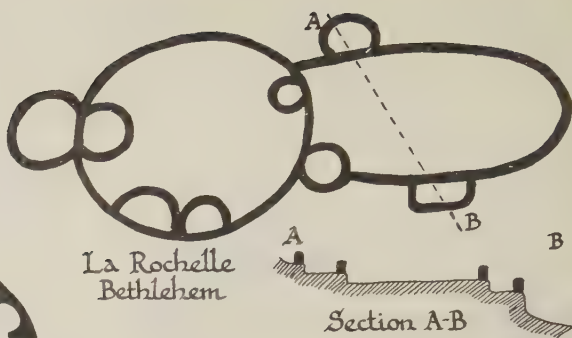
Stone-walled kraals appear to have been constructed in almost the same way by all the Sotho-Tswana tribes who built in stone, i.e. by building a double-row foundation of massive blocks and filling the interspace with rubble. There are, however, considerable differences in the kraal patterns. The Bafokeng kraals are notable for the way in which one wall is used to serve more than one kraal, as with the cave enclosures, thus often necessitating that the one kraal should be entered through another. The inner kraal is often a bulbous protrusion at the end of the larger, as at Buispoort and Metlaeeng (Fig. 2), and kraals of this type are still built, with walls up to 8 feet high, by the Bafokeng in Basutoland. In other cases small kraals, not more than 6-7 feet internal diameter, are built within and adjoining the larger kraal, as at La Rochelle, Susanna and Qoaling (Fig. 2). It is difficult to determine the function of these tiny enclosures unless they were shelters for the cattle herds. Sometimes the kraals are circular but more often they are oval or sub-rectangular and in many cases the floor is levelled out of the hillside, notably at La Rochelle. This arrangement is quite different from the free-standing circular kraals associated with the corbelled stone hut settlements.

EARLY FOKENG SETTLEMENT in SOUTH AFRICA

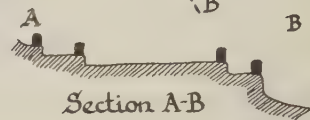




Susanna
Bethlehem



La Rochelle
Bethlehem



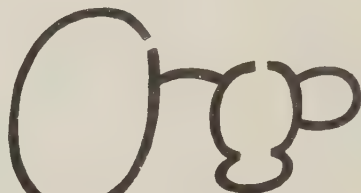
Section A-B

LINKED-KRAAL GROUPS

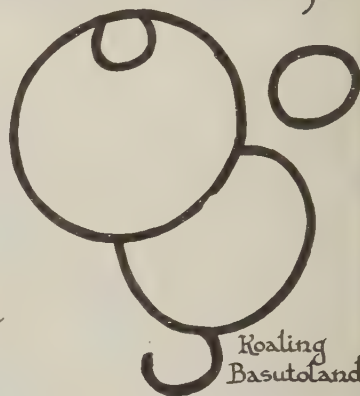
10 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 feet



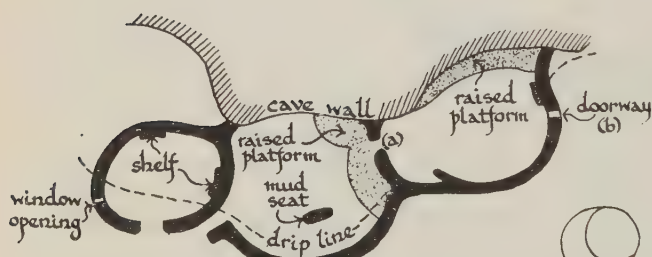
Buispoort
Zeerust
after van Hoepen
and Hoffmann



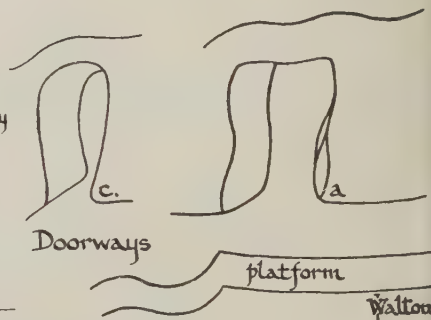
Metlaezeng, Basutoland



Koaling
Basutoland



10 0 10 20 30 feet

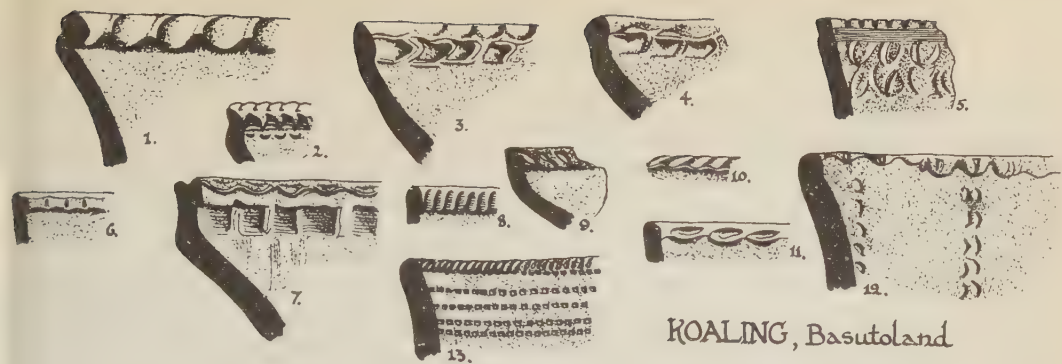


Doorways

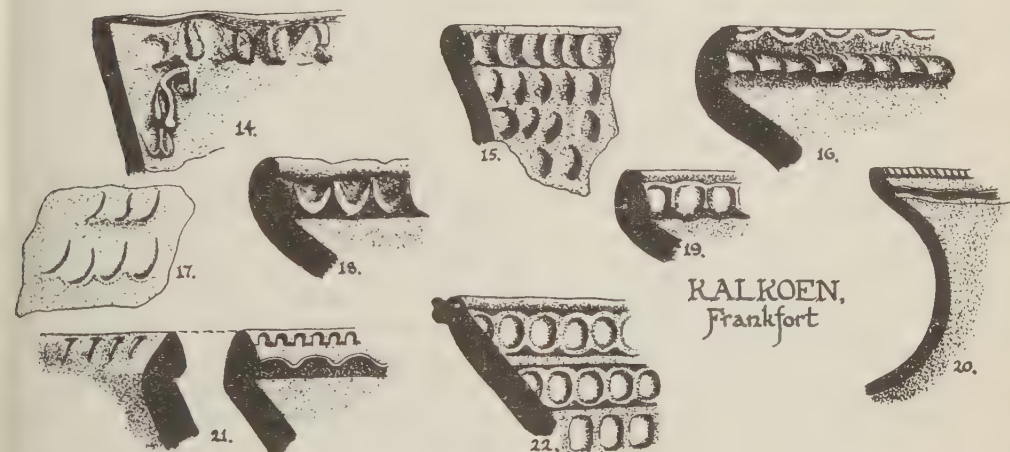
platform

Walton

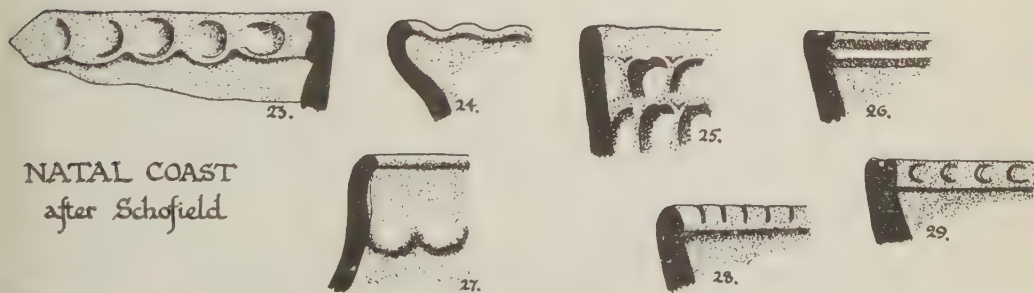
CAVE SHELTER DWELLINGS NTLO KHOLO



ROALING, Basutoland



RALKOEN,
Frankfort



NATAL COAST
after Schofield

Salton
1954

PATTERNED-RIM POTTERY

Hut Foundations

The hut foundations at Metlaeeng, Basutoland, may be regarded as typical and are definitely authenticated as Bafokeng. One excavated hut base consisted of a circle of stones, 6 ft. 6 ins. in diameter, the stones being set on edge and sloping slightly inwards. At the entrance the stones are splayed outwards to form a porch. An arc of a second inner ring of stones at the back of the hut marked the pot store. Part of the floor was cobbled and, judging by the reddened appearance of the stones, this served as the hearth. A number of similar hearths have been unearthed at Qoaling. A second hut was identical with this except that no hearth was discovered. The third hut was larger, diameter 9 feet, and the floor was paved with a mosaic of flat stone slabs (7). Old Bafokeng women state that formerly their huts had floors of this nature which were smeared with clay.

The huts, according to old Bafokeng informants, were small beehive structures of wattle and thatch with a row of upright stone slabs around the base of the thatch to prevent water from entering the hut or animals from scratching their way in under the thatch. To protect the occupants against wild animals the doorway was made very small and a person could only wriggle through on his stomach. As a further precaution, particularly against hyenas, a short stabbing assegai was stuck in the thatch over the entrance and the blade of such an assegai was found in the floor of an hut entrance at Metlaeeng. Two huts of this type are depicted in Lagden's photograph of cave dwellings at Leribe.

Similar paved hut floors, associated with middens, have been discovered at Qoaling. One paved floor also served as a pottery hearth and was covered with a mass of sherds. At Kleinfontein Haughton and Wells recorded hut circles surrounding the entrance to the cavern. These were rings with a diameter of 10-12 feet, formed of flat stone slabs, the thickness of the stone work being 6-8 inches. Each ring had an entrance gap of from 18 to 28 inches in width. The floor was of earth, artificially levelled, but no indications of stone paving were observed. Circular paved

hut platforms with a surrounding ring of upright stones and circular paved hearths have also been described by Laidler from Willowglen and Krugerskraal in the vicinity of Heilbron. These are ascribed by Laidler to his Krugerskraal I Period which preceded the corbelled stone hut settlement (8).

At Buispoort, near Zeerust, van Hoepen and Hoffman have described a series of stone-walled kraals associated with circular paved floors surrounded by rings of stone (9). These the authors described as threshing floors but by analogy with hut floors elsewhere and from their association with the middens (each group of floors adjoins a midden) it seems much more probable that they were hut floors of the same type as Metlaeeng, Willowglen and Kleinfontein. The large number of these floors and the absence of any other hut foundations also supports the belief that they were hut floors. This settlement is ascribed by van Hoepen and Hoffman to the Bahurutse but the nature of the kraal patterns suggests a strong Bafokeng influence. The fact that the Bafokeng were associated with the Bahurutse for such a long time in this area probably accounts for these Bafokeng features.

Pottery

From the southern Transvaal, the Orange Free State, the Natal Coast and the Transkei comes pottery which Schofield has classified as ST2 in the Transvaal and the Free State and NC2 on the Natal Coast. Although he associates it with the Bafokeng he also describes it as characteristic of the corbelled hut settlements. It is, however, only found on those corbelled stone hut sites which on other cultural grounds reveal a dual Bafokeng-Leghoya Taung occupation and in such cases this type of pottery would appear to be due to the Bafokeng element. At other stone hut settlements such as Doornberg and Sand River ST2 pottery is absent or nearly so. No example of the colour-banded stamped ST1 ware has been noted from the Bafokeng site of Qoaling in Basutoland, where ST2 pottery is universal.

The most noticeable feature of this pottery is the richly patterned rim which was modelled by

a piece of stick or the finger whilst the pot was still soft. Pots with notched rims made after the pot was dry are found on a number of stone hut sites but the Bafokeng rims were modelled in the wet state, pressing out the clay into characteristic ridges (Fig. 3. Nos. 1, 3, 4, 7, 10, 12, 16, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24). Surface decoration is rare but sometimes the pot is covered with hollows made by the tip of the finger, "Honey-comb" (Fig. 3. Nos. 22, 25), nail impressions, "Nail-marked" (Fig. 3. Nos. 5, 15, 17) or with raised irregular points, "Cuspidated". On occasion the clay is worked up into breast-like patterns (Fig. 3. No. 27) or into raised projections (Fig. 3. No. 14) and rarely one finds lines of oval impressions made by a reed or grass stalk (Fig. 3. No. 12). The latter are common at Buispoort and may possibly represent Bahurutse influence. One piece of stamped ware has been found at Qoaling but the pattern is merely a band below the rim and is quite different from the chevron and arcade patterns, alternating with coloured bands, which characterize the ST1 pots of the stone hut settlements. Undecorated pots with flattened rims, due to standing the wet pot on its rim whilst drying, are also quite common.

The larger pots are unburnished and are simply smoothed with the fingers or a scraper but the smaller pots often show a rich red burnish. The use of contrasting coloured bands is entirely absent. In shape the larger pots are round bottomed and at Qoaling there have been found hollow, stone-lined pot rests with the bases of the pots still in position. The bases of the smaller pots, particularly from relatively later sites such as Metlaeeng, often show a tendency to flattening. Feet, found at Buispoort and a number of Heilbron sites, seem to represent an intrusive element.

Iron Working

Iron objects are rare and it is possible that the Bafokeng never smelted iron but obtained their iron products from the Bahurutse or other iron-working tribes with whom they came in contact, thus accounting for the uniformity of iron implement types. Schofield gives a number of quotations from early writers to show that the Bantu

living around Port Shepstone and Durban in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (the areas visited by the Ba'Mutla about that time) had very little iron and used "wooden pikes with their points hardened in the fire" (10). The presence of large quantities of stone implements in the middens at Qoaling is also what one might expect among a non-iron working people.

Modes of Burial

The practice of burying still-born infants and young children in the middens, either in a pot or with a stone covering, is widespread among the Sotho-Tswana peoples and it was followed by the Bafokeng. No authentic adult Bafokeng burials have so far been excavated. Among many Sotho tribes it was common to bury the headman inside the cattle kraal and other members of the family either under the kraal wall or just outside. This custom may have been followed by the Bafokeng but associated with the settlements at Qoaling and Mabula are graves of a very different type. Those at Qoaling are situated on the top of the plateau above the village, those at Mabula at the foot of the scarp behind the village.

These graves have a definite and universal bombé plan and are built of stone blocks with a vertical slab at head and foot. One example from Qoaling is 11 ft. 6 ins. long, has a maximum width of 5 ft. 10 ins. at the centre, 2 ft. 7 ins. wide at the head and 2 ft. 2 ins. wide at the foot. The highest point is 3 ft. 2 ins. above ground level. Similar graves exist on the top of Qeme plateau a few miles to the south, and the graves of the chiefs of the line of Moshesh on the top of Thaba Bosiu are also of this type. Their distribution and their association with Bafokeng sites at Qoaling and Mabula suggests that they are a Bafokeng feature but only excavation and much further research can confirm such a theory.

The possibility that they are late and represent a Christian influence cannot be ignored but their uniformity of shape, which is unlike the usual Christian grave, indicates that they represent an older tradition. Graves consisting of mounds of stone occur among other peoples. Dreyer and Meiring have described mounds of stone covering

early Hottentot burials but these are of a very different shape (11). Mounds of stone with definite headstones and footstones are known among the Somali and, although I do not suggest any connection with the Bafokeng, this fact does indicate that the type is widespread and traditional in eastern Africa and not the result of Christian influence.

This culture, ascribed to the Bafokeng, occurs precisely on those sites which are in the area traditionally occupied by that tribe (Fig. 1) and the association seems to be well-founded. The picture is by no means complete but this can only be achieved by the excavation of other early authenticated Bafokeng sites such as Mabula.

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BOOK REVIEW

African Methods of Fire-making. S. LAGERCRANTZ. *Studia Ethnographica Upsaliensia*, Uppsala; 1954. xvi, 77 pp., illust.

This monograph is No. X in this series and the costs of publication have been defrayed by the *Humanistiska Fonden*. The monograph has been published in celebration of Bernard Struck's 65th birthday.

There are twelve sections in the book and they cover the various known ways of making fire in Africa and include the fire-drill, the fire-saw, the fire-syringe and fire-making with flint and steel, the typology of African fire-drilling sticks and an historical survey.

The monograph is a study in ethnology and shows why a particular type of fire-making occurs

in different localities, and is not a study in social anthropology explaining how a particular type of fire-making functions in a given society. The disciplines are different, the objectives different, and no comparison can be made between them.

Anthropology is much indebted to the labours of Lagercrantz who has concentrated in one volume all that is at present known of the methods of making fire in Africa. The comparative method is used which at present is in eclipse in Britain - so much the worse for British anthropology, for one has but to recall such giants as Tyler, Rivers, Elliot Smith, Hocart, whose reputations were built up on the use of the comparative method. Lagercrantz makes a few poignant criticisms on the present neglect of this method by British anthropologists who are now obsessed with loca-

lized studies of marriage, kinship systems and the social structure of particular tribes.

Though the title of the monograph is *African Methods of Fire-making*, material from all over the world is reviewed and forms about half the book. I may add that the fire-drill method of making fire is still used among the Bikom of the Bamenda province, British Cameroons.

The cord-drill, the fire-saw, the fire-syringe and the bow-drill methods of fire-making are, according to Lagercrantz, not found in Africa. The pump-drill, like the wood-drill method, is in use only in Madagascar, and these appear to be importations from Asia.

The method of making fire by flint and steel is fairly wide-spread in Africa but the question arises, was fire not made by the percussion method in Southern Africa before the advent of steel? Hewitt in the *Annual of South African Museums Association*, No. 8, p. 91, claims that certain hafted stone implements must have been used for making fire, obviously by striking another stone against it. H. Goodwin considers that these hafted stones were scrapers. I have recently reviewed the position of these alleged scrapers and have reached the conclusion that they were used for making fire [see "What are they?" in the *South African Archaeological Bulletin*, Vol. X, No. 37, March 1955, pp. 26-29.]

Lagercrantz (p. 76) does not accept that in Africa the making of fire by striking two stones together is old, but says it has arisen by imitating the flint and steel method of making fire and hence cannot be older than the introduction of iron. I do not subscribe to this view.

Lagercrantz (p. 62) claims that the fire-drill is the oldest method of making fire in Africa. He may be right because Africa and the African tropical forests are to-day considered to be on the borders of the cradle of mankind. It would then seem that the fire-drill was developed in the

humid atmosphere of the tropics where the slow steady heating up of the materials of ignition would first dry then and thus enable them to catch fire. The strike-a-light method could never in a spark, generate a sufficient quantity of heat both to dry out the damp tinder and then ignite it. Hence the strike-a-light method of making fire is restricted to the drier regions of the earth. These people who had learnt to make fire by the drill method would continue to use it even in dry regions. The distribution of the fire-drill suggests that its occurrence in Indonesia (vide Maps I and II) may be due to the early traffic in Negro slaves.

Though the fire-drill method may be the oldest method of making fire, nevertheless the percussion method appears also to be old in Africa. Lagercrantz has a partiality for the Portuguese. In his book *Contributions to the Ethnography of Africa* 1950, he credits the Portuguese with bringing to the Negro the idea of making annular pottery vessels. Here, he suggests that the strike-a-light method of making fire was introduced also by the Portuguese, but he produces no evidence that they did so. On the other hand it is far more likely that this method was introduced into Negro Africa by the Arabs who were trading from the Nile to the Senegal river by 1,000 A.D.

The historical survey offers lines for further research. Some of Lagercrantz's conclusions and diffusions will not be generally accepted but he has done anthropology a service by marshalling what is known of fire-making in Africa and by suggesting origins and avenues of diffusion. The book is essential to all students of material culture and to those interested in the problems of diffusion, culture contacts, independent invention, and the psychic unity of mankind.

M. D. W. JEFFREYS.

LINGUISTIC RELATIONSHIPS AND CONTACTS EXPRESSED IN THE VOCABULARY OF EASTERN BUSHMAN¹

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SYNOPSIS

The dialect spoken by the Bushmen of the Eastern Transvaal contains not only words borrowed from Zulu-Swazi, English and Afrikaans, but also reflects an older contact with Sotho and Tsonga speaking tribes. The link between these Bushmen and the \pm khomani of the Southern Kalahari is, linguistically, extremely close.

1. The once numerous Eastern section of the Bushmen of Southern Africa is represented to-day by some 20 to 30 survivors² who are found on farms in the Lake Chrissie district in the Eastern Transvaal. There are other inhabitants of this area whose physical appearance indicates a strong Bushman strain, but who, nevertheless, ally themselves socially with the Bantu and refuse to acknowledge their Bushman ancestry. The members of the former group, however, recognize themselves as Bushmen and most have a knowledge of the Bushman language. Some members of this group present a remarkable purity of type from the physical aspect, but all that remains of their former culture is their language. The deficiencies of the Bushman language in the present-day environment have been met by extensive borrowings from other languages, but these borrowings have mostly taken the form of additions and embellishments and have not seriously obscured the essential structure of the original language.

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¹ This paper is based on research conducted during the period March 1954 - September 1955.

² It would seem that the Eastern Bushman dialect is doomed to extinction within the next 20 years. The language is not being passed on to the children and from researches conducted by the Department of Anatomy in the University of the Witwatersrand, it has emerged that there is at present no pure Bush family with any children.

The majority of borrowed elements in Eastern Bushman is taken from the present-day linguistic environment (viz. Zulu-Swazi³ and, to a lesser extent, English and Afrikaans). The manner in which borrowed words have been cast in the Bushman mould is of some interest. Of greater interest, however, is the not inconsiderable number⁴ of loan-words which point to an older contact with Sotho speaking people and with people of the Tsonga group now resident in Southern Mozambique, or, possibly, even the Inhambane group.

2. The borrowings from Zulu-Swazi are the most numerous and extend to certain inflexional elements as well as lexical items. In the examples of borrowed nouns given below, it should be noted that the prefix *ha*:⁵ and the suffix *zi* are affixal morphemes from Bushman, the former associated with the predicative use of substantives⁶ and the latter with nouns generally; in particular, the substantival use of forms which are basically predicatives. The prefixes *li* and *ma* are presumably

³ Professor D. Ziervogel describes the local dialect as "Swazi with Zulu sounds".

⁴ Our investigations of Eastern Bushman have led to the acquisition of a basic vocabulary of about 450 words. This by no means exhausts the present-day vocabulary of Eastern Bushman, however, and more loan-words will undoubtedly be found.

⁵ Examples from Bushman and other languages given in this paper are all recorded in the phonetic script of the International Phonetic Association in order to present correspondences in speech sounds more clearly.

⁶ Under interrogation Bushmen informants are almost incapable of giving a word in isolation. A word is always given in a sense-group and, quite often, a considerably extended sense-group.

noun prefixes from Zulu-Swazi, but are often used irrespective of the class of the borrowed noun and even with English and Afrikaans words. It is noteworthy that they do not occur in loan-words from Sotho and Tsonga.

ha:-li-ju:-zi (It is honey) cf. Sw.¹ *lu:dzu*

ha:-li-bubezi:-zi (It is a lion) cf. Sw. *libube:si*

ha:-li-khambi:-zi (It is a remedy) cf. Sw. *likha:mbi*

ha:-li-kozi:-zi (It is a departed spirit) cf. Z.-Sw. *liho:zi*

ha:-li-kuzulu:-zi (It is a flea) cf. Sw. *lik?ulu:lu*

ha:-li-βi:-zi (It is a voice) cf. Z.-Sw. *li:vi*

ha:-li-sonto:-zi (It is Sunday) cf. Z.-Sw. *lis:nto*

ha:-li-khasi:-zi (It is a leaf) cf. Sw. *likha:si*

ha:-li-xawu:-zi (It is a shield) cf. Sw. *lixa:wu*

ha:-li-nykawu:zi (It is an ape) cf. Z. *inyk?a:wu*

There are also certain common verb stems which are easily recognized as borrowings. In the following examples the prefix *iy* is a connective pronoun with a 1st person singular reference, and *e* a predicative suffix with, apparently, no precise significance.

iy-gula:-e (I am ill) cf. Sw. *gu:la*

iy-gibela:-e (I am riding) cf. Sw. *gibe:la*

iy-phumula:-e (I am resting) cf. Sw. *phumu:la*

iy-lala:-e (I begin) cf. Sw. *la:la*

Bound morphemes of probable Nguni origin which are now commonly used in Bushman are the prefix *za* signifying future time, the suffix *sa* of causative significance and the prefix *so* with

the significance of the progressive formative *sa* in Swazi.

*iy-so-?a-η?e*² (I am still present)

iy-so-c?e:wa (I am still well)

ay-||kxa?a:-sa (You annoy)³

iy-za:se (I will come)

*iy-za-η-|kxe*⁴ (I will speak)

3. The following two examples suffice to indicate the nature of borrowings from English and Afrikaans, which are, in any case, not numerous.

ha:-li-skukupati:-zi (It is a tortoise)

cf. Afrikaans *skelpat*

ha:-li-ouipdji:-zi (It is an orange)

cf. English *vindz*

4. The Sotho element in Bushman comprises some nine or ten nouns and verbs which, it is suggested, indicate a fairly close contact between Bush and Sotho peoples in that they are not merely names which accompanied certain cultural items acquired by the Bushmen. A fuller vocabulary of Eastern Bushman than that available at present, would doubtless augment the following list.

ha:-ts?we:le (It is a baboon) cf. S.S.⁵ *tshwe:ni*

ha:-?a: (It is hunger) and *iy-?a:* (I am hungry) cf. S.S. *tl?a:la* (hunger)⁶

ha:-qhu:qhu (It is a fowl) cf. S.S. *kxhuhu* and Tswana *k?u:k?u*

ha:bey (It is an owner) cf. S.S. *be:η*

thu:gu (side; e.g. at the side of) cf. S.S. *thu:k?u*

ha:-sibi:-zi (It is iron) cf. S.S. *tshi:p?i*⁷

ha:-ma:k?a (It is strength) and *η-gi-mak?a-η?e*⁸ (I am strong) cf. S.S. *ma:tl?a*

¹ The Zulu-Swazi (Z.-Sw.) forms are given where available, otherwise the Swazi (Sw.), or occasionally the Zulu (Z.), form is given.

² *η?e* is a connective pronoun of 1st person singular reference, used suffixally (cf. the prefix *η* or *iy*). This repetition of the pronoun in the predicative is fairly common. Note that the nasal consonant in this form is syllabic. Syllabic nasal consonants are however, not marked in this paper.

³ Cf. *iy-||kxa?a:* (I am angry). *ay* is a connective pronoun with 2nd person singular reference.

⁴ The only explanation that can be offered for the presence of the syllable *η* is that it is connected with the repetition of the connective pronoun in the predicative.

⁵ Southern Sotho.

⁶ The possibility of an origin in the Zulu form *in-*

ha:la does not seem likely because (a) *h* does exist as a consonant phoneme in Eastern Bushman, and (b) the language is not averse to taking over the nasal compounds in borrowed words from Nguni. These present no serious violation of the structure of Eastern Bushman which has sequences of nasal consonant plus plosive, although phonemically these appear to constitute two units and not one (vide *ha:-li-nykawu:-zi* (monkey) <Z. *inyk?a:wu*), and (c) there is no prefix *li* or *ma*. The possibility of a Nguni origin for other words such as those for "fowl", "iron", etc. is also rejected for reasons (b) and (c) given above.

⁷ Another possible derivation from this Sotho word is *ha:-tse:be* (It is a spear). Note that *e* represents the semi-close mid-vowel.

⁸ This word is comprised of the following morphemes: *η* (I) + *gi* (possession) + *mak?a* (strength) + *η?e* (I).

ha:-pu:xi (It is a goat) cf. S.S. *pu:di*

*ha:-dʒwe*¹ (It is a stone) cf. S.S. *li:dʒwe*

From the information available to us, it is impossible to give any precise indication of the time and place of the Sotho/Bush contact which would explain the Sotho element in the Eastern Bushman vocabulary. There are no Sotho speaking people resident in the Lake Chrissie area to-day and even the oldest Bushmen have no recollection of any contact with the Sotho and know nothing of their language. The nearest Sotho speaking people are probably Northern Sotho speakers in the Middelburg district some 100 miles to the north-west. But it would seem that the Sotho influence is that of Southern and not Northern Sotho. There is no strong evidence to support this statement, but the word *dʒwe* for "stone" seems to indicate this. The Northern Sotho (and also the nearest Tsonga speakers) have this stem *bje* and it is unlikely that Eastern Bushman would have seriously distorted this form in the process of remoulding it.

It is well known that in pre-European times contact between Sotho speaking tribes and Bushmen was extremely close and occurred over a wide area.² There is apparently no record of a Sotho tribe which was resident in the general area of Lake Chrissie, however, although there is little doubt that Sotho tribes have traversed this area in their migrations.³

5. The words which the Bushmen use for "tobacco" and "hemp" (*dagga*) are evidence of Tsonga influence, viz.

ha:-pho:le (It is tobacco) cf. Ronga *fo:le*⁴

ha:ba:ndzi (It is hemp) cf. Ronga *mba:ngi*⁵

In their reference to specific items of culture which are easily borrowed, these words do not

¹ This is not the common Bushman word for "stone", and it was obtained from one group of informants only.

² See D. F. Ellenberger's *History of the Basuto*, London, 1912.

³ We are indebted to Professor D. Ziervogel for a reference in support of this statement and also for information on forms from the dialect of the Nguni inhabitants of the Lake Chrissie area.

⁴ This word has in turn been borrowed from Portuguese, viz. *folja* (leaf). Note that *f* is not found in Eastern Bushman.

⁵ This root with a probable origin in the Indian term "bhang", has a wide distribution on the East

necessarily indicate intimate contact between Bushmen and Tsonga speakers, although it is of interest that the Swazi and Zulu inhabitants of the area use the usual Nguni terms *ugwa:ji* (tobacco) and *intsa:ngu* (hemp) and have no knowledge of the Ronga forms.

Two other forms have been observed, however, which may emanate from the Bantu speaking tribes of Southern Mozambique, viz.

tsuma (run) cf. Ronga *tsutsuma* (run) and Tshwa *tsutsuma* (run). This form is taken from Miss Bleek's vocabulary of Eastern Bushman⁶ but was not used by our informants.

kala (lie down) cf. giTonga *khala* (stay, sit) and the Tsonga dialect of Vila de João Belo, and Tshwa which have *kala* as a deficient verb stem with the significance of "ever" and "until" respectively.

6. The following are words which, from the prefixes *li* and *ma*, seem to be loan-words, but no close correspondences can be found to them in the Bantu languages mentioned above.⁷

na-ma-qeperuŋ (They are brides)

ha:-li-ḡagu:-zi (It is a mouse or rat)

ha:-ma-kele:ḡa (It is a snake)

7. This paper is mainly concerned with the influence of non-Bushman languages on the Eastern Bushman dialect, but it is not out of place to draw attention to genealogical relationships within the Bushman language group and point to certain facts which emerge from a comparison between our material on Eastern Bushman and that contained in the more recent works on Bushman dialects. In this respect, we find a very close linguistic relationship between the Eastern Bushmen and the Bushmen of the Southern Kalahari (in particular *ḡkhomani*)⁸. The list

Coast. The change in the final syllable possibly emanates from a desire to incorporate the common suffix *zi*.

⁶ D.F. Bleek: *Comparative Vocabularies of Bushman Languages*, Cambridge, 1929.

⁷ Readers' suggestions as to the origin of these words would be welcomed.

⁸ Our sources here are Professor C. M. Doke's "An Outline of *ḡkhomani* Bushman Phonetics", *Bantu Studies*, Dec., 1936; and Professor L. F. Maingard's chapter on "The *ḡkhomani* Dialect of Bushman: Its Morphology and Other Characteristics" in *Bushmen of the Southern Kalahari*, Johannesburg, 1937.

given below represents less than half of the identical or closely similar roots appearing in the two dialects and reflects a high degree of similarity when it is borne in mind that the available vocabulary of *±khomani* is small.

	Eastern Bushman	<i>±khomani</i>
"bite"	<i>tsʔi:</i>	<i>tsʔii</i> ¹
"come, give, bring"	<i>sa</i>	<i>sa</i>
"eye"	<i>tsʔagu</i> ²	<i>tsʔaxam</i>
"fat"	<i>swi</i>	<i>soē</i>
"hair"	<i>/khū</i>	<i>/khu</i>
"home, hut"	<i>/ʔi:</i>	<i>/ʔ</i>
"horn"	<i>/gi:</i>	<i>/kēi</i>
"meat"	○ <i>a:</i>	○ <i>koe</i>
"moon"	<i>kʔolo</i>	<i>±ʔɔlɔ</i>
"night"	<i>/ga:</i>	<i>/ʔaa</i>
"person"	<i>kwi:</i>	<i>!kwi</i>
"sleep"	○ <i>i</i>	○ <i>ʔun</i>

¹ The double vowel symbol indicates a single long vowel. The form in which these words have been recorded has not been changed.

² One informant indicated *tsʔaxu* as the form used "long ago".

"son"	○ <i>ō</i>	○ <i>kō</i>
"sky"	<i>jaʔagu</i> or <i>gaʔagu</i> ³	<i>!gaa</i>
"sit"	<i>fo</i>	<i>sou</i>
"tooth"	<i> khī</i>	<i> kēi</i>
"water"	<i>qha:</i>	<i>!kha</i>

In a comparison of Eastern Bushman and *±khomani* with the dialects spoken by Northern Bushmen, however, very few correspondences in roots are found. In this case comparisons have been based on Professor C. M. Döke's vocabulary of *!khū*:⁴ and also a short list of words obtained from the "River Bushmen" of the Okavango by members of a research party from the Department of Anatomy in the University of the Witwatersrand, who recently visited that area. The close similarities existing between the southern and eastern dialects of Bushman are in sharp contrast with the dissimilarities that exist between these dialects and those of the north.

³ There are indications that *gu* is a suffix in Eastern Bushman.

⁴ "An Outline of the Phonetics of the Language of the *!hū*: Bushmen of the North-West Kalahari", *Bantu Studies*, Dec., 1925.

RETIREMENT OF DR. M. D. W. JEFFREYS

At the end of 1955, Dr. M. D. W. Jeffreys retired from his appointment as Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology in the University of the Witwatersrand, a post which he had held since 1946. By his retirement we have also lost an editorial colleague who has been associated with us in the production of *African Studies* for over six years, and whose assistance and co-operation have always been of the greatest value to us.

Numerous articles from his pen have appeared

in *African Studies* and various other journals for many years. In his retirement, we are assured, he will settle down to writing up the vast quantity of material which he has collected, so we and other journals may look forward to receiving further papers by him from time to time. We extend to him our sincere good wishes for many pleasant and fruitful years of leisure, wherein to devote himself to the fields of study and research which are so near to his heart.